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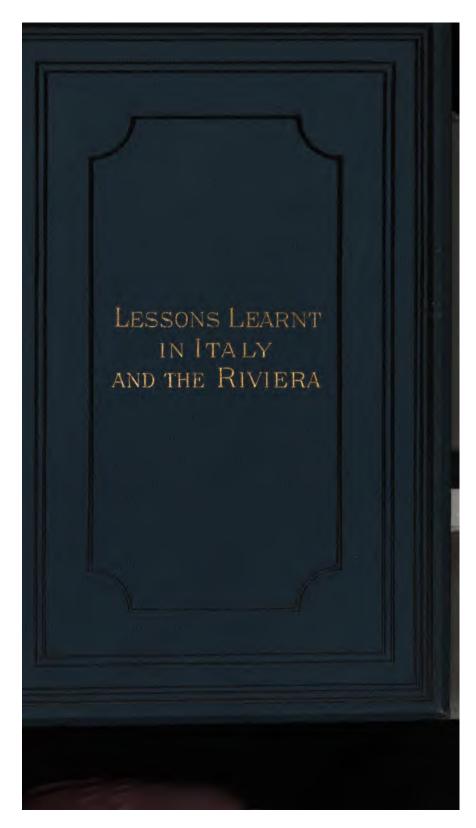
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LESSONS LEARNT IN ITALY AND THE RIVIERA.

BY THE

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PREFACE.

VISITORS to Florence will remember the morning cry, fiore, fiore,—flowers, flowers. The cry was welcome, because the flowers were so fresh and fair. But if the visitor was tempted to carry home to England some of these lovely flowers, he would probably find that the roses were faded, and that the orange blossom had lost its beauty.

I am afraid that these descriptions of delightful scenes of travel will be like those flowers. They were like them in their beauty when I visited them. They must be more like them in their decay when reproduced here.

Still they are a little offering to the many to whom I owe much of the enjoyment of a most healthful journey, and such I am sure will accept the attempt to make others sharers in the pleasures they gave me.

To some these pages may seem to savour too much of the pulpit. Probably they do. But when you ask a person to speak, who is more at

home in the pulpit than in most places, what else can you expect? Still I have tried to reduce the sermonic element to a minimum.

Others may miss here topics I have been wont to touch. They cannot miss them more than I do, for spiritual themes do indeed lie closest to my heart. But it would be sad if the love of spirituality were to make one selfish. The fear of this, and the hope of giving help to readers who have not yet learnt to love spiritual subjects, have been the motives for allowing my pen here a wider margin. There is a good precedent for becoming "all things to all men," if only the object be by all means to "save some." Surely such object may be both aimed at and attained while we listen to the warnings of Pompeii and the witness of Florence and of Rome.

J. B. FIGGIS.

Brighton, Nov. 1st, 1881.

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I. The Riviera.

I

I sate upon the deck, and watched the nigh And listened through the stars for Italy. I could hear my own soul speak, For Nature comes sometimes And says, "I am ambassador for God." I felt the wind soft from the land of souls; The old miraculous mountains heaved in sight.

Peak pushing peak,
They stood: I watched, beyond that Tyrian belt
Of intense sea betwixt them and the ship,
Down all their sides the misty olive-woods

with the waterfalls
Which powder all the myrtle and orange groves
With spray of silver. Thus my Italy
Was stealing on us.

E. B. Browning.



T.

THE RIVIERA.

"I stood on the sand of the sea,"-Rev. xiii. 1.

THE sea was the Mediterranean, not "the sea of glass" beheld in heaven. The word sea there is supposed to be used as in the temple of Solomon. equivalent to a laver: the laver between the beautiful gate and the altar, around which in symbol the hierarchy of heaven was gathered. That sea could have no strand. But this had; I take it, therefore. for the literal sea, and in this case for that which flowed about Patmos, John's island prison, and it was no other than the Mediterranean, which some of you have crossed, several of you seen. Its northeastern waters embosom Patmos, where John then was; Scio, where the earthquake of last spring took place, and a hundred other fairy gems of the Archipelago; while its north-western waves break on the shores of Italy and France. And it was there that these words came to me; there that I, too, "stood by the sand of the sea,"

What a sea it is! Now it bears upon its bosom Indiamen by the score, laden with the luxuries and comforts of Malay and Hindostan; now it carries transport ships, filled (alas! that it should be so) by soldiers—military missionaries, as people of the Society of Friends might call them—of the great Christian powers, of France for Tunis, of England for Afghanistan. Centuries ago it carried "Cæsar and his fortunes," and in the centuries between, Popes and Anti-Popes, passing to and from that Avignon we visited on our way to its sunny shore. It was on that sea that Pliny was admiral, that the galleys of Augustus pulled from the shore, that Paul crossed from the holiest land on earth to the mightiest. Its

"Shores obey the stranger, slave, or savage."

A wonderful sea, truly! Well might the ancients call it as they did, the "great sea."

But it has another aspect more familiar to us. It breathes health. Its air, strangely dry instead of moist like that by northern seas, has been the joy and the rejoicing of multitudes sensitive to every change, from Milo's day to ours. And so along its northern coast, where this is specially the case, France and Italy have each vied with the other in welcoming sojourners from the atmosphere of heavier lands; and in one of these towns of the Riviera (as it is called) it was—in that one which was the creation of an English Chancellor—that at first, and for the first time in my life, "I stood upon the sand of" that "sea,"

What would it avail were I to describe its blue, of deeper dye than any in the world surely-Tvrian blue, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning calls it; or the beauty of the scenes whose loveliness has passed into a proverb: rather let me instead try to find here not the great historic lessons which great cities dead or living, Pompeii and Pæstum, Florence and glorious Rome will give us, but some simpler, and mayhap sweeter, lessons of my sojourn by the sea, and so tread its silver sand, search its golden sand, look at the pearls beneath its waters, and listen to the shingle breaking on its shore. Its silver sand—Isaiah names it when he says, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." (Isaiah liv. 13). Its golden-Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 29) when he says, "A people saved of the Lord." Its pearls-Paul set some of them when he writes, "Comforted of God" (2 Cor. i. 4). And Matthew (ii, 12) echoes the undertones of the breakers when he speaks of being "warned of God."

Taught of the Lord. Saved of the Lord. Comforted of God. Warned of God. These, then, may stand as mottoes for four vignettes to precede the larger pictures I have promised to try to paint.

"TAUGHT OF THE LORD." (Isaiah liv. 13). That, we said, was the silver sand of this southern sea. The word came to me at Grasse, the first town in the hills beyond Cannes, where Napoleon first bivouacked after he landed from Elba; there on

the 26th of February last, as we entered the Cathedral we were followed by a group of children, eager to possess themselves of the bright little books one of our party was handing them, and in spite of cries of "Protestant," earnest and delighted to hear about Jesus.

"Taught of the Lord." It came up again at Bordighera, whence they send the palms to Rome yearly to be blessed by the Pope, but whither come from all Italy little waifs and strays to be blessed with a higher blessing,—for there the widow of a British general, a few years ago, started an industrial school, where trades and book learning are taught, and where a Vaudois pasteur speaks of the love of God in Christ to eager listeners, both young and old.

"Taught of the Lord." I thought of it again in Florence, in an institution similar to Mrs. Boyce's, —that just named—but on a larger scale, where a young Italian lawyer, Dr. Commandi, himself a Roman Catholic a few years ago, now gives such clear testimony to the truth of Christ, speaking by his life and by his lips, that multitudes are compelled to listen.

"Taught of the Lord." I thought of it again in Rome itself, in Mrs. Wall's school, where I heard devoted teachers, both Italian and English, gathering the children and speaking to them of Christ. Let us see that both by prayers, and gifts, and efforts we are aiding work like this, and so gather-

ing the silver sand that it be not swept out again by the rude sea.

But, before being teachers, let us see that we be learners in the school of Christ. Under a picture of the woman of Samaria I saw inscribed. "Lassus ut inveniat me" (" wearied that He might find out Is it so that Jesus will fix His time, His place. His very weakness, to suit my seasons, to find my soul? Conceive, if you can, a higher intellectual privilege than to have Jesus for a teacher: to have Iesus take time and trouble to get into our dull minds thoughts of God, and heaven, and holiness? And in some way He is teaching, He is teaching all by shining suns, and sparkling seas, and bursting flowers. "There is no speech nor language, no voice is heard,"* but spite of that God teacheth, the lessons ARE given; but are they learnt, even those written in blood-and that His own?

Never tread the sand of the sea, never walk our beautiful beach again, without asking yourself whether your sins, as many as those sands, have found a covering as complete as that sea.

If so, for I dare not hint at other lessons, let this well-worn word lead us from the silver to the golden sand, from "taught of the Lord" to "SAVED OF THE LORD."

It is Moses' word (Deut. xxxiii. 29), his exclamation of wonder and delight over Israel; it brings up to my mind the thought of one with

^{*} So many render Psalm xix. 3.

whom I held sweet converse on those sunny shores. He had been in the world, and married in the world, but somehow—from the influence of a Christian parentage probably—convictions stole in upon him, and conscious of the shipwreck of his soul, he was now driven in to shore, now carried out from it again,—he did not yet stand "upon the sand of the sea." But the impressions returned, "the Lord being merciful unto him," and by the aid of one in his own profession, and the teaching of one of God's ministers (I know him well), he was led to break with the world and decide for Christ.

I wonder whether, amongst my readers, may be some yet halting between two opinions. Can you refuse or delay to take the final step? "I mean to take it," you say; meaning alone will not do. You know what you think, in other matters, of a well-meaning fellow; you must grasp the promise, you must get the Christ, and, having done with compromises, never stop till you are "saved of the Lord."

I am not sure that it would be the pure gold we are seeking, if salvation ended here. No doubt it is a great thing if I am a slave to see the shackles fall, but they have galled my wrists, and since the iron entered into my soul, I want healing; they have bound my mind, I want teaching; and so does the soul that comes to God. God knows it, if we do not; and when He puts the new song in our mouths, it is not merely "who forgiveth," but "who

healeth,"-"forgiveth all thy iniquities, healeth all diseases." Now, have we got the healing? Ay, and as a proof of it, have we got the health? found many a one in the health-resorts of the Riviera longing still more earnestly for this soul health: and it is a good sign that there is so much of this longing in so many directions now, specially good, when we remember that "He will satisfy the longing soul," and that "they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness" are "blessed," and "shall be filled." If we would but "grip" the promises (as a dear friend puts it), receive the anointing, vield to it, and abide under it—let the fresh full dew of the Spirit saturate our souls like Gideon's fleece—then would this soul-health be not only sought but found, and men would have a right to say, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved of the Lord"!

"COMFORTED OF GOD" was the motto of my next vignette. "Comforted of God"—Paul sows this seed-pearl (2 Cor. i. 4), and unspeakably precious it is. To think that it should be true, true of any human being, of any child of clay, of any child of sin, that any mortal sorrow should be a concern to the Majesty on high, and a concern so great that He should bow the heavens and come down to give the sufferer comfort! But are there any such; any so comforted that it is manifest that God is their Comforter?

Enter with me a room of a hotel by the sand of

that sea, and see there, stretched upon the bed, one whose countenance is as full of manly energy as it is of manly beauty. He held a position of some eminence in his profession, when an accident came and shattered him. "At first," he said to me, "it did seem hard to be struck down in middle life. but after I gave up my will to God I had no more trouble about the matter. I am never dull: Jesus just wakens me in the morning and stays with me all day, always, always! When I was in Brighton" (I did not know till then that he had been here), "for months I saw no minister, and somehow I did not seem to want one much." assuredly, for though not comforted of men, he was "comforted of God;" so completely, that it seemed to me as though his head rested on something whiter and softer than the pillow,-on the purity of Jesus, and on the bosom of His tender love.

I point to this case, as someone pointed me since to the watermark high against the walls of a house in Florence, showing where the waves had reached in some unwonted tide. So this, if it be unwonted, yet is proved by the instance not to be impossible; and I see no reason, none but our unbelief, or our refusal to yield our will about the matter (for that you see was the critical point in this case); no reason why we in our sorrows should not suffer as this sufferer did in his; why we should not have the same cheering, and the same calm, for have we not the same Christ? Let us not say the thing is

impossible. I say it cannot be impossible, for there it is, and I saw it with these eyes; it is actual. And there is in Scripture, and in the Saviour, enough, amply enough, to make it as frequent as it is rare. Yes, if only you will search for them, dive for them, you will find amongst these "sands of the sea," pearl drops of divine sympathy, and when you have found them, do with them as Cleopatra did,—imitate her for once,—dissolve the pearl and drink it; take the joy the Lord gives you, and it will be "your strength," and you, too, shall be "comforted of God."

Once more, and only once, come down and stand upon "the sand of the sea;" the winds of heaven strive over the deep; no pearls nor gold are we looking for now: the common shingle of the shore are the objects of our search, and reason there is as great that we should listen to these as look for those. Listen to them, you say, what can you mean? I mean to the voices they lift up when dashed as they may be on the beach, whereby we are "WARNED OF GOD" (Matt. ii. 12).

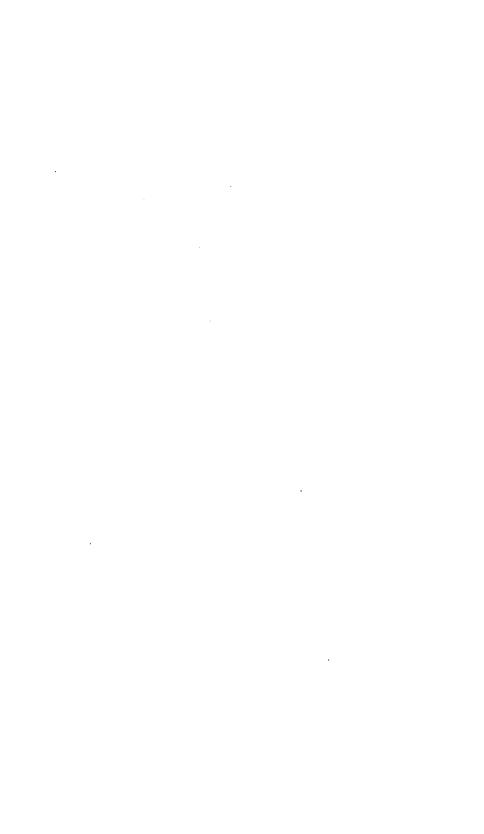
From Cannes I went twice for a day or two to Nice; the first time it was all gaiety and glitter, innocent gaiety and harmless glitter as it seemed—the flowers, the masks made it a very merry holiday. Not so innocent *some* of the pleasures of the place, and of places near, especially of Monaco and Monte Carlo, turning blood-red the blue of the sea that breaks in beauty on their shore:—yes, blood-red, for they

say there were nineteen suicides last February alone, and, of the high play which leads to this, Nice, the largest neighbour city, is said to be chief patron. A life of such high play, and high pressure in every way, lost to the claims of men and time in its greed for gain or for a new sensation, is sure to be forgetful of the claims of God and eternity. Yet these surely were forced upon it when one awful night last Spring (I had but just passed on to Italy) a fiery column was seen hovering over the city, and the Nissards rushed to find their theatre in flames! I cannot picture the confusion and the cries of the night, or the finding and the burying of the dead next day; but surely one may write over the gay city now, "warned of God."

And are we not all? One cannot find a gray hair, but he is warned of God; cannot discern a hollow cough, but he is warned of God; cannot pass a grave, or see one carried there, but he is warned of God. To some His warning is of out-breaking sin, like that gambling; to some, of some quite respectable sin; to others, about their whole course of life,—lived, as it is too often, for self and not for others, least of all for Christ. God may hold awful colloquy yet, in an awful place, and say, How camest thou hither,—how camest thou to die unsaved? In any case, friend, remember, I gave thee warning. Thou passest to thy account, be thou guiltless or guilty, yet, at least, "warned of God."

So, as "I stood on the sand of the sea," these thoughts of teaching and saving, of comforting and warning, came to me. Take them for what they are worth, or, if worthless, cast them from you. For even if worthy I would not have them content you—rather think your own thoughts, ye dwellers by the sea; learn your own lessons, for in every wave that breaks upon your shore God is teaching you, and "who teacheth like Him?"





II.

The Isles Lerin and Capri.

"Little they dream, those haughty souls
Whom empires own with bended knee,
What lowly fate their own controls,
Together link'd by Heaven's decree;—
As bloodhounds hush their baying wild
To wanton with some fearless child,
So Famine waits, and War with greedy eyes,
Till some repenting heart be ready for the skies.

Think ye the spires that glow so bright
In front of yonder setting sun
Stand by their own unshaken might?
No; where th' upholding grace is won
We dare not ask, nor Heaven would tell,
But sure from many a hidden dell,
From many a rural nook unthought of, there
Rises for that proud world the saints' prevailing prayer.

KEBLE.



CHAP. II.

THE ISLES LERINS AND CAPRI.

"Listen, O isles, unto Me."—Isaiah xlix. 1.

IMAGINE yourself in the English Cemetery at There, grouped around the memorial cross to Lord Brougham, are the graves of many names with touching associations; one, the child of parents known to us here, on which they wrote, "Is it well with the child? It is well." "Iesus called a little child unto Him." Another to the Hon. Dudley Keith-Falconer, son of the Earl and Countess of Kintore, whose cenotaph I had seen and pondered over in their beautiful park at Keith Hall, near Inverurie; another, to Col. Picard, · Assistant Private Secretary to Queen Victoria, "erected by his betrothed and widowed bride;" (he died the day they were to have been married!) a wreath and card in our Queen's own handwriting lay on the tomb. Very near him we laid the relative of one who has ministered amongst us. But the spot on which I want to fix your attention

is not the cemetery, nor the orangeries and olivevards that are near, nor the gardens rich with mimosa, nor the wilds clad with the Mediterranean heath; not the mainland at all, but the Islands, the Lerins, as they are called, which break the blue sea so beautifully and glisten in the sun gloriously. There are two of them: the first, Ile Marguerite, was the prison lately of Marshal Bazaine, and long ago of the Man in the Iron Mask, over whose stories I cannot pause, for to me the attraction is in the island farther off, the Ile St. Honorat, so called from one of a band of Monks, who 1,400 years ago or more, made the lonely spot their home. It was in the days when it was something very real always, and very religious generally, thus to flee from the world. It meant prayer and study and labour. Many a swamp was reclaimed, many a manuscript was copied, and best of all, many a soul (that else might have remained in Heathenism) thus was won. Through , them God was saying then, "Listen, O isles, unto Me."

There is one known in ecclesiastical history as St. Vincent of Lerins, who was the author of the celebrated dictum of a valid tradition, "quod ubique. quod omnibus, quod semper:" an excellent rule if it could only be obeyed, but as it cannot be, we may be very glad we have the written word, and no uncertain tradition on which to rely.

Of St. Honorat himself I have been able to dis-

cover but little, but I have found in our Library here much that is interesting about a pupil of his, whose festival day came round while I was sojourning in sight of the spot where for nine years he learned at St. Honorat's feet the way of Christ more perfectly.

He was a young Scot, born at Kilpatrick about the year A.D. 372. In a raid made on the coast. he was carried off at the age of sixteen to Ireland, and, like Joseph, was sold as a slave. His master gave him (and here he was like Moses) his flocks to keep, and, says the lad, in what we should call a diary, but what he called a Confession, "I was always careful to lead my flock to pasture, but while I did so, I prayed at least a hundred times a day, undeterred by rain or snow, and often in the night, and so was I strengthened in the fear, and faith, and love of God." After seven years, God showed him the way out of captivity, and after hair-breadth escapes by sea and land, he found his home, and there God showed him another thing. In a vision (much as to an earlier and still greater Apostle), appeared a man from a heathen land. In this case he carried a bundle of letters, and on one was inscribed, the voice of the Irish, and the cry seemed to sound in his ear, "Come to us, O holy youth, and walk among us." Ireland was then, a more terrible land even than now-nearly all of it was heathen; but the young Scot could not shake off the vision, and he resolved to go.

would not, however, go untaught, and so his life tells us how he spent years in France and Italy, especially in Auxerre and in Rome, preparing himself for his great life-work; but even then, like a later countryman of his—like Knox, who did not preach until the age of forty-three—he felt his mind immature, and so he sought the hermitages of the Mediterranean, there to find the full discipline that should fit him for his Missionary labour; and thus it was that the young Patricius—whom all the world knows as St. Patrick—came to the Isles of the Lerins.

I cannot tell you what interest it gave to those scenes on which I gazed every day for more than a month, to think that for so much longer a period, one to whom an island dearer far and greater. listened, had been a student there. I wish I had either the time or the power to trace his subsequent career, as glorious, perhaps, as that ever lived. wish I could tell you how he was the means of converting foes into friends; and not only friends to him, but to God; how he ranged through Ireland, bringing tribe after tribe to the foot of the Cross, and leading princes to exchange their sceptres for the missionary's staff; yes, and how he kindled a fire which burned so that a century later Columba returned to Scotland the debt she owed for Patrick's Mission to Ireland. But. I wish one thing more, one thing supremely, I wish I could convey a little of that fire to burn upon your hearts, and when I say that fire, I say it advisedly. I mean a fire like it for *purity*.

The confession of that Apostle of Ireland, which Catholic and Protestant alike allow to be genuine, is conspicuous for its simplicity. Later writers have been accused of writing of his miracles and nothing else. He himself writes of everything else but miracles; these he never names. Divine monitions he does indeed believe in, and expects very real guidance—but of miracles not one word. Such simplicity of narrative was intolerable to the superstition of the ages that followed, but surely it will be a recommendation to this. Surely, thinking men will learn to winnow the grain, and not to reject the wheat, because of the chaff which is so manifestly the addition of later hands.

Then I suspect there was simplicity of another kind; a great and beautiful simplicity of Church government. St. Patrick built 365 Churches, and appointed 365 Bishops. The Abbé, who writes his life, is astonished at this,—he states it, and tries to cut down the figures,—but there they stand, as many Bishops as Churches: we can account for it, I think, if he cannot. We can see that the Bishops in that Primitive Missionary Church, whatever they were becoming in more ambitious places were, "not lords over God's heritage," but little, if anything, more than simple pastors.

I leave the lesson to write itself on your mind, and hasten to name another which must have occur-

red to you when I said I longed to re-kindle the holy fire, to re-kindle in your hearts. I want especially young hearts here to burn with a like ardour for I know few things more beautiful than this man's life (prolonged they say to the age of a hundred and ten years) spent in devoted labours, ranging Ireland through, often with the bare earth for his couch, urging, warning, proving, entreating men to turn to God; nothing grander, I say, unless it be the sight of his going back to the man whose slave he had been, to try to win him, and shedding floods of tears when he died impenitent. very well to say that was the age of missions, and one of the ages of faith. Be it so; but in this age there are glorious fields, grand and wide and white unto the harvest. I count it a joy and an honour to have lived through the period of the Madagascar Persecution, the restoration of Chinese Evangelization, and now of the beginning of delightful and acceptable service for Continental Europe. And I want to know

"What are you going to do, brother? What are you going to do?"

Contrast that earnest, vigorous life service with the dilatory, indolent, useless life of some; contrast it with the luxurious, the vicious life of others.

"Which is the life worth living? Which is the life for you?

Say that if you have been indolent, careless, till this moment, you will not cumber the ground one day more; say that the peep at these busy, earnest workers shall shame you into being a worker too, a worker, I trust, as earnest as the best; and remember that before work is study, and with both is prayer.

That islet of the blue sea was the witness I ween of many a toiler poring over manuscripts (there were no printed books) and of hours of supplication to Heaven, and but for them, the isles (the northern isles) would never have listened, nor God's people have hearkened from afar.

One thing more. Before honour is humility. The diary I spoke of begins, "Confessio Patricii Peccatoris," i.e., "the Diary of Patrick, a sinner." One of the best workers and best men I know was at death's door lately; he told me that he got up fron his bed with this lesson, how utterly vile and contemptible were all his doings. Friends, let us begin like the publican, "God be merciful unto me a sinner," and go on like Paul, "Christ Jesus came nto the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," and end like Jude, "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

And now let me hurry you away from the south coast of France to almost the south coast of Italy, and there fix your eyes on another island as great a contrast to these, as the lives of the men who lived there. The Bay of Naples, the glory and beauty of its land, has for its guardians two lovely islands,

one just now in every one's lips, the other in the memory of every one that has ever breathed its enchanting air. The one is Ischia, whose recent earthquake startled and saddened so many; the other is CAPRI, whose bewitching outline captivates each beholder.

A calm and summer day we chose to cross, visiting the grotto which so brightly reflects the deep blue water, that every rock and every stalictite itself is blue, and then we landed to breathe the only air of the south not impregnated by the vapours from Vesuvius. Gloriously the sun sunk beneath the sea as that evening we wandered to the headland, once crowned with twelve palaces, and for nearly as many years the home of the brd of the world, the Roman Emperor TIBERIUS. not be afraid that I am going to weary you with his history; I have re-read it, but it is too avful to repeat, especially that part of it which has stamped Capri with horror, and done all that mortal man could do to turn an earthly paradise (ii ever God made one) into an earthly pandemonium.

Tiberius had spent an almost praiseworthy life while Augustus lived, nor was great fault to be found with him during the life of Livia, his mother; but when they were both dead, he threw off the mask, "and tired of curbing his passions (see to what humanity may sink!), he retired to this island on the Campanian coast, and gave himself up to idleness, which he only interrupted to do ill." He

or his creatures startled Rome by some fresh accusation against relative after relative, till his name became a synonym at once for lust and cruelty. In all this he found one too like himself in the low born Sejanus: but at last the master turned against the servant, and Sejanus fell. When he was dead the Romans hoped for a milder rule; but Tiberius soon undeceived them, and let them see he wanted no prompter for his crimes.

If one desired a contrast to the holy memories of St. Honorat, and the earnest labours originated there, surely it might be found in this Capri. A heaven upon earth by God's creation; a hell upon earth by man's sin. But I am anxious rather to impress upon your hearts a more startling, instructive contrast still. For, as I recollected while wandering about that bright and glorious islet, three of the years which Tiberius spent at Capri, and which he did his best to make the blackest in human history, were in spite of him the brightest of years the world ever saw. For "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar... the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness" (Luke iii.)

Conceive if you can a greater contrast than that, in birth, in life, in death, and in posthumous fame.

In birth, Tiberius, if not born in the purple, was born to it, as the son of Livia—Livia, the wife of Augustus; Livia, the most powerful woman in Rome or in history. He was prepared by all the arts, and

every training, to fill the most exalted position, and to fill it as became an Emperor. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the obscure village of an obscure province. Tiberius lived before the eyes of all men, watched, waited on, worshipped; with legions to command, and millions waiting to be like his legionaries. Jesus lived for thirty years unknown, all but unnoticed, in a carpenter's house, and learning his trade, and when He burst from obscurity (for "He could not be hid"), even then He studiously avoided all offers of greatness only too eagerly thrust upon Him.

Tiberius died after a long reign either a natural death, or in any case in the enjoyment of power.

Jesus died the death of a malefactor at the hands of an alien race. The contrast, heightened at every step in outward fame, is reversed immediately that we look at the inward; nay, is reversed when we think of the verdict of posterity.

Who cares for the Imperator, the lord of the world, that Tiberius, now? But everyone knows, millions acknowledge, and thousands love, his obscure Subject who suffered death at the hands of his procurators. The One with all outward griefs, sorrows, wants, privations, persecutions, was yet the very synonym of peace profound and joy divine. The other with everyone to wait on him, everything to suit, and to serve, and to gratify him, was so miserable that he could begin a letter to the Senate in these terms:—"What to write to you, Conscript

Fathers, or in what manner to write, or not to write, if I know, may all the gods doom me to still more cruel agonies than those I now suffer." How true are the words of Socrates:—"If the souls of tyrants could be seen, they would be found to be full of scars and wounds."

I hardly know any more conspicuous example in history—and it is enhanced by the loveliness of the Monarch's retreat-of what we need to be continually reminded of, that no pleasure can please, no gratification can gratify; not the supply of every wish, the anticipation of every whim, can make man content if there be the yielding to known sin. the giving way to any evil appetite. But this is not the last, I say, of the lessons of the scene.

Those lessons carry us on to the contrast with Christ, and lead to searching inquiry as to the secret of His supremacy over the greatest of His contemporaries.

It will not do to say it was the contrast of virtue and vice; other men have been virtuous, but they are not Christ to me.

It will not do to bring in miracles, and say, Jesus wrought what no emperor could,—wonderful works; for others have wrought deeds of wonder, and vet are not Christ to me.

It will not do to bring us His cross, and say, His death has given a pathos to His life; there were many martyrs, but they are not Christ to me.

Only one thing will account for the unique position

Jesus occupied, as greater than the greatest, as well as better than the best of men, and that is a UNIQUE NATURE. He was more than others, because He was more than man. His death was more than theirs, because it was divinely died, and in it was the offering of a divine atonement. Christ and His cross transcend all other men, and all other tragedies, because He manifested the nature, and the cross the Sacrifice, of the Most High God.



III.

Pompeii.

"At a step

Two thousand years roll backward, and we stand, Like those so long within that awful place Immovable, nor asking, Can it be? Once did I linger there alone till day Closed, and at length the calm of twilight came, So grateful, yet so solemn! All was still as in the long, long night That followed, when the shower of ashes fell, Then they that sought Pompeii, sought in vain: It was not to be found. But now a ray, Brighter and yet brighter, on the pavement gleamed, And on the wheel-track worn for centuries, And on the stepping stones from side to side, O'er which the maidens, with their water urns, Were wont to trip so lightly. Full and clear The moon was rising, and at once revealed The name of every dweller and his craft; Shining throughout with an unusual lustre, And lighting up this City of the Dead."

SAMUEL ROGERS.



CHAP, III.

POMPEII.

"Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."—Luke xvii. 28, 29.

I NEVER felt the force of these words as I did the first day I visited Pompeii. I had heard the place described, had read the history of it, had seen photographs and models of it, but neither sunpainting nor word-painting, no, nor the very marbles and bronzes from the spot (for these, too, I had seen in profusion at Naples) could give the impression produced by the scene itself. That porta marina, 26 feet wide by 19 high, and 120 long, makes a fitting entrance to the most awe-inspiring scene in our Western World; the streets so silent and so perfect, the houses so tenantless, and yet so adorned that it seems as though the tenant had but just left them. Enter this—you are in the Atrium of Sallust; or that—you are in the peristyle of Diomed, with all the surroundings so fairly complete that you almost expect Diomed or Sallust to appear and rebuke your intrusion. You see the signs carved above the shops where they sold wine, where they taught children, where they dyed their cloth, baked their bread; the bones of the ass that turned the mill, were found there. Enter this gate, and you are in the barrack where the legions were lodged and some horses were stabled. Pass under yonder portico, and you are in the street where the Romans burnt their dead, and where the Greeks (for there were Greeks there too) buried theirs. But why talk of a "street of tombs" when the whole place is a city of the dead?

You know the occasion and the period of its ruin. There overhung the city a mountain, *Monte Summa*, clad with vines and pines, and crowned with a temple of Jupiter. No one knew, no one thought any harm could come till in the time of which I was speaking in the last chapter—the time of Tiberius—it showed symptoms of disturbance. These increased, and in A.D. 63, when Nero was Emperor, "the neighbourhood was convulsed by an earthquake, which," as Seneca records, "threw down great part of Pompeii and Herculaneum."

Still, the citizens felt little alarm comparatively. The event was exceptional. It might never occur again, and so they set to work to rebuild their shattered city. Alas! better abandon it for ever, as you, sinner, should abandon the city of destruction.

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The walls had risen again, temples, aqueducts, theatres all adorned too, adorned as if nothing had occurred to bring them trouble. "When," as the younger Pliny wrote to Tacitus, "his uncle, the admiral of the fleet at Misenum, saw a cloud of unusual size and shape. He could not tell whence it came, nor, alas for him!—whither it went. It was now bright, now black and filled with cinders. Wishing to investigate so striking a phenomenon, he had out his Liburnian galley, and against the entreaties of the sailors, put off from land, desirous of relieving, too, the people in distress. Pumicestone and flint burst upon the ships, and prevented their return ashore."

In a second letter, Pliny says:-" The light that day was faint and languid; buildings reeled so that we resolved to quit the town: the chariots were so agitated backwards and forwards that we could not keep them steady even by supporting them by large stones. The shore was enlarged, and several sea animals were left on it. On the coast opposite a black cloud frowned, bursting with igneous serpentine vapour, and covering the sea. My mother urged me to flee, life being of little worth to her. But I refused to leave her and led her on. ashes now fell thick upon us, and it became as dark, not as a cloudy day or night, but as a lights extinguished. with The shrieked, believing the last earthly night come. There came a glimmer, but it was only the harbinger

of a burst of flames. At last the real day returned, as when an eclipse is coming on, and everything seemed to our eyes (which were greatly weakened) covered with white ashes, as with snow. We returned to Misenum, and passed an anxious night between hope and fear, but with a much larger share of the latter." And well they might, for their dear relative had gone to his account. And when the storm was spent not only Pliny the elder but Pompeii had perished in the ruins. "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all!" Let us see how they lived, how they died, and read the epitaph on this vast and awful grave.

They ate, and we see the very triclinium at which the Roman guests reclined. They drank, and we think of the scenes, in which people emulated prince, like that drinking bout of Tiberius which lasted two whole days. They bought, and there is the forum of traffic with the Doric columns along three of its sides, a fair terrace once above, and colonnades beneath. They sold; yes, there are traces of vermilion in which the names of dealers were written on pediment in the market place, or architrave of house. They planted a garden round a fountain in every house. They builded houses, temples, theatres. Pompeii is the place to see what an ancient house was like:—the atrium or entrance hall; the

peristyle, with covered colonnade, opening into the tiny rooms for rest; picture gallery and library; and upper stories with windows here and there remaining, and baths abundant. Yes, you may go to Pompeii to see HOW THE ROMANS LIVED, and I say, it was a life of pleasure. I wish I could think it was only that, and not also of sin. I fear it was so none the less because there were many temples there: for some were temples to mere men and others to foul gods and goddesses. Such was their life, my friend, and what is yours? If the thread were cut this moment, if this hour your life were to be interrupted, what occupations are those in which you would be surprised? Are they such that neither God nor man would miss them much, or are they such that you could close your career without compunction—not to say without a sigh? I only ask the question, and leave the answer to you. neither time nor inclination to attempt a piece of anatomy, and so set your life before you as that of the Pompeians is displayed in their city now. I do ask you, unsaved and saved too, to see that the life that you are living is one of which conscience can speak without its voice being like near or distant thunder.

I pass to notice, HOW THEY DIED—swiftly, suddenly, all but in an instant. The bread was in the oven, some of it has been preserved; the fuller was busy with his cloth, some of that all charred, as it is, is still shown; the surgeon was busy with

instruments such as modern surgery can hardly excel; and the sentinel before the gates kept the city, the very spot where he was found at his post being pointed out. The pictures on the walls are as fresh and fair as though they were painted but yesterday: that Io, and yonder Penelope, look as though the artist might come back with his brush to complete a picture he could not improve. saddest sight of all those forms moulded from life, encrusted with the falling scoriæ,—here a dog, and there a human being, a man fallen with plunder in his hands from some dwelling he has robbed, a woman with armlets and rings from some scene of gaiety which she would not leave:—all seem to sav how awful a world we live in, and how near we live to the other world. There are the lists of voters written up for an election which never came off: coins in the treasury for some pay day which never arrived; the granary with its grain and its table of measures, neither of which will ever be needed again:—a most solemn scene and a most suggestive one! It seemed to me, as I looked upon it, as though the judge of all were there stooping down, and on those ashes from the furnace, writing on the ground, "Prepare to meet thy God." "Be sure your sin will find you out." "Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found."

So all that evening and next day there came trooping into my mind thoughts about JUDGMENT, SIN, AND REPENTANCE. About judgment, and the

need of preparing for it. About sin, and the danger of its finding us out. About repentance, and the reason and season for exercising it.

These thoughts, this invisible writing by the finger of God, is what I call THE EPITAPH OF POMPEU. There is a word in it about JUDGMENT. ting to be the fashion to doubt many things written in the Book about judgment to come, and in some quarters it seems even to be taken for granted that God is too kind to judge, or too clement to condemn. "I believe in the God of nature, you know," many a man hints, "not the God of priests, nor of books, even of books of Scripture." Indeed! and is nature all soft and lovely, soft to sin? The nature that I know.is a nature that has torrents, and tornadoes, and volcanoes in it. It seems to me it is we Christians who believe in the God of nature, while those who talk this wild talk just believe in a God which their own fancies, if not their own fingers, have made. is not the God of nature, but of their thoughts, and the wish is father to the thought.

Heaven forbid that I should represent God as harder than He is. He is infinitely more tender than either you or I can depict Him, but he does answer us by terrible things in righteousness.

I must say that that day at Pompeii I got an insight into these terrors, such as I think I never had before, and out of the mouth of these two witnesses, the Bible and nature, every word shall be established.

For He is the same God still; the God of the year

A.D. 79 is the God of the year 1881. Ascend to the cella of that ruined temple of Jupiter. Look out upon the prospect. What is this that blocks up part of the horizon and pollutes, alas, the troubled heavens? The very mountain that overwhelmed the doomed cities in the first century. The mountain has not ceased its threatenings yet, nor has God, my friends. So that, unless we could get into a world in which there is a different God, we should not be secure from suffering while we remain outside of His great salvation.

But as you note the judgment, note also that it was not without a cause, and not without a warning.

"Not without a cause." That cause was SIN. The walls of Pompeian houses are covered with paintings a Giotto might envy: the loveliest frescoes I ever saw, but for the most part showing disregard for all higher feeling, and some of them pandering to the lower—to the lowest of all. We may not say, we do not suppose, that they were "sinners above all" Romans, but they were a specimen of what such men are, and of how such men may have to suffer.

"Not without a warning." The disturbance of the mountain six years before, A.D. 73, and possibly some symptoms again before the final catastrophe, faintly foretold its approach. And these warnings were *not unheeded*, thank God. It has been noticed by many how few bodies were found among the ruins. It is supposed that most escaped, and that in fact those that fell may have been only those who (in the very course forbidden in Scripture) "returned to take something out of their house," or perhaps to plunder the houses of others, or else some guilty ones who would not leave. Be ve also "Remember Lot's wife." Remember there is time for escape, and opportunity too, opportunity most blessed: a Saviour and a salvation, all divine, all complete; and remembering these things hasten forth, flee for your life, look not behind vou. "Break off thy sins by righteousness," and break them off now, repent now, believe now, accept Christ now. If there is to be a turning, there must be A TURNING POINT. Let this be it, so may the vision of judgment and the lesson of sin be crowned with the experience of REPENTANCE,—a repentance which needeth not to be repented of.



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IV.

Pæstum.

They stand between the mountains and the sea; Awful memorials, but of whom we know not. Time was, they stood along the crowded street, Temples of gods, and on their ample steps What various habits, various tongues beset The brazen gates for prayer and sacrifice.

All silent now, as in the ages past, Trodden under foot, and mingled dust with dust."

SAMUEL ROGERS.

"Art itself

We've called the larger life, must feel the soul Live past it. For more's felt than perceived, And more's perceived than can be interpreted, And Love strikes higher with his lambent flame Than Art can pile the faggots."

E. B. BROWNING.



CHAP. IV. ·

PÆSTUM.

"We would see Jesus."-John xii. 21.

IT was a memorable moment, and followed (who can doubt?) by a memorable meeting. A meeting in which Iesus came face to face with representatives of the great Gentile world to which we belong. For these men were not Grecized Hebrews, hardly Hebraized Greeks. They were at most proselytes of the gate, admitted only to the court of the heathen, never to the Temple itself. But in this place was One greater than the Temple. What if they could be admitted to Him! The thought came to them, and with the thought the desire; for they had deep longings, unsatisfied longings, hitherto. They hoped that Christ would satisfy those longings, and so, finding out the one* Apostle who had a Greek name, they came to Philip to ask him to obtain for them some quieter interview, in which they might broach their doubts,

^{*} One of two rather.—Philip and Andrew.

and pour out their desires, and lay their longings at His feet—as you your sins, doubts, and sorrows. And in them, all the Gentile world, as it were, was present. You were there, and I was there, we all were there; and they did but give expression to our feelings when they said, "We would see Jesus." But who were these men, and what does their longing amount to and imply? I hope that you will understand better what manner of men they were, from the excursion which in thought I have asked you to take with me to THE RUINS OF PÆSTUM.

As I daresay the scene is as unknown to you as till April 13th it was to me, let me try to describe the place itself, and the position of the place. South of Naples, a spur of land runs out into the Mediterranean, opposite Capri—this is Sorrento. Below this point another bay runs in—the bay of Salerno. On it is situated the mediæval town of Amalfi; and surely, more picturesque situation could not be found. In the midst of profuse loveliness, but hidden by rocks and cliffs, some of the last of the Romans placed their home, and from it reached forth to grasp the trade of the world, and "had their factories at Jerusalem, Alexandria, Bagdad, Tunis, Cyprus, and Constantinople, and founded (by sanction of the Caliph of Egypt) the hospital which led to the establishment of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, afterwards honoured with the proud title of the Knights of Malta."

We went to Amalfi one day, and the next to Pæstum. Very different is its situation and its story. We drove through a desolate plain, skirting the shore: here through wilds in which fed herds of buffaloes, yonder among hills which a few years ago were the hiding place of brigands. The road is safe now, but still patrolled. After meeting the mounted guard, we drove on hour after hour, and at length saw rise white against sea and sky, the vast portals of vast ruins, so hoary that that mediæval city of Amalfi is but of yesterday, and even the ruins of Pompeii are modern compared with them. They were built before Cyrus gave leave to the captive Jews to return to Jerusalem, perhaps before Jerusalem was captured.

But they have more of interest than antiquity alone can give. Hitherto we have been amongst the works, be they ancient or modern, of our western world. Pompeii itself is chiefly a Roman city, but here at Pæstum we gaze upon the works of another race, we come in contact with the Greek mind. "But this is Italy you are speaking of; Italy, not Greece." True, but as your histories tell you, the Greeks (the English of the old world) teemed with a population too great for its own land to support, and burned with an ardour too intense for its home occupations to satisfy. So they became great colonizers, as great in proportion as the English of to-day. They planted their colonies eastward, through Asia, especially Asia Minor, and

hence it is that the churches there, as well a Europe, bear Greek names; and all the New Te ment, not only the letters to Greek cities, was wri in Greek: and westward they saw the smiling sh of Southern Italy, and long before Rome had her eagles there, they came and possessed the l possessed it so entirely that it was called Ma Græcia; and here was one spot which they n entirely their own. A few wretched inhabit crowd now within the border where once moved masses that go to make up city life. They I their walls-but they have crumbled; their thea —but they are prostrate; their houses—but the not left one stone upon another; but their TEMI stand, vast, massive, imperial, and seem li enough to stand till the crack of doom.

There are three of them. The first you approach that of Ceres, or possibly Vesta. It is 107 long by 47 wide. Thirty-four columns stand their glory. The next is misnamed the Bas (i.e., the court of law; for churches when so ca are copies of ancient law-courts); but reall temple, and a magnificent temple too, with peristyle of fifty columns, on which now the golizards play. The third, the temple of Nept with twenty-eight pillars below and eight n above, covering the largest space of all—a hund and ninety-five by seventy-eight feet. Altoge the most imposing memorials of Grecian architec to be seen (they say) this side of Athens.

And these were the men, mark you, the builders of these temples were the men, some of whose descendants came to Philip saying, "We would see Jesus." If one is right in taking the latter as specimens of their race, then surely there is plain proof here that art and architecture, skill and culture, pomp and pleasure, may still leave the soul unsatisfied. We have seen, we have built temples. they seem to say, but stones cannot save. We have seen, we have built theatres, but pleasures. even such pleasures as can be got from the tragedies of Euripides, or the comedies of Menander, cannot satisfy. We have seen fair lands, we have built fair cities: but home lands or foreign lands cannot sanctify. And we want, we do want to be holy show us Jesus; bring us to Jesus. "We would see Iesus" and be saved. "We would see Iesus" and be satisfied. "We would see Jesus" and be sanctified too.

And, my friends, do not your hearts say the same? Am I wrong in saying that these men were representatives of the Greek mind? Why rather the limit is too narrow, for they were representatives of the universal mind of man. All the world over people have what one calls "unsatisfied longings."

There is the longing of the mind; how deep and intense he (Dean Stanley)* knows now, who with that great catholic soul of his, whose very fault was

^{*}These lines were written when all men's minds were full of his death.

a sympathy with the doubter so intense that it sometimes led him to seem to be on the doubting side, has passed into the world of certainties. All his life through, from his schoolboy days at Rugby till his dying days at Westminster, he gave indications of the deep desire of men to be more certain of the ground under their feet in all the great questions of being. Yes, there are unsatisfied longings of the mind.

There is the longing of the heart. Many a one that has hardly intellectual activity enough to move in that region, moves in this, this region of the affections in whose warm bright air—warm and bright as of that Lucanian Coast—the affections play. Oh! even here there must be many such, many with a beating heart, longing to be loved; it will be a broken heart some day unless it is.

There is the longing of the life. Not a few there are, too, with the keen conscience, sensitive as the plant that bears that name, to every sin, and intensely desirous to be done with it. Hungering for holiness, as the children who crowded about the precincts of those temples hungered for bread.

Yes, from all classes, from all ages, from all nations, goes up a great yearning cry—confess it, own it, do not be ashamed of it—we want light, we want love, we want holiness. "We would see," would see that which can give us these, all these, and more.

For (and this is the second, the other great lesson

of the scene) we want more perhaps even than these things—just the one thing more which is expressed in the one word more of this question. which I left out, the word "Jesus." Those Greeks have other things to show us besides pillars pile upon pile, in temples like these. Even here "one of the tombs had beautiful paintings on the walls." They are now in the Museum at Naples; and what is Italy but one vast treasure heap in which some of the choicest treasures are Greek sculptures—like that faun of Praxiteles, of which no less than eight copies are to be found in Rome; or that Jupiter and Juno, so striking as works of art, so sad as objects of worship. I came the other day on a sentence in which a philosopher apologises for them. He says, we can think of the Deity as a spiritual existence, but the people want something to see-they must have statues. Methinks these Greeks who came to Philip, plainer men probably, were nearer the goal of human inquiry than that philosopher. They felt with him indeed—we do want some outward representation of Deity, something to bring down the Absolute from His unsphered height to our own level; but if it could be a person, and such a person as this ineffable Being whose words are as wise and winning as His works are beautiful and wonderful, and whose life (they say) is as lovely as either;—if it could be He, and we could see Him, then what we seek would have been found. We see Jesus, and we are

satisfied. For the longings we described are met in Him, and another longing too, the longing for forgiveness. Did the ruins of Pæstum denounce judgment against every sin? This question of the Greeks opens the way for its remission and removal. For Jesus is "the way."

There are those now who greatly wish to bring the world to be content with beautiful sculptures and paintings for the eye, poetry and literature for the mind, and there to leave us; in a word to bring us back to the condition of things amongst the Greeks of old. But before we consent to go back with them, let us see what sort of people they were who fed on that sort of food, and who lived that sort of life in perfection; what sort of people, and whether they were satisfied with the results of their own experiments, or whether those results were in themselves satisfactory. These temples of Pæstum answer the first part of this inquiry; this question to Philip answers the second. One may challenge contradiction, I think, when he says on the one hand, that a more cultured, civilized world there never was than the Greek world—nor, on the other, one more rotten, heartless, and unhappy. only were the creeds honeycombed with doubts, the lives were like those stones which you hardly need to lift for the lizards to dart forth. No. no: the problem was worked out under the most favourable conditions, and the product was the most deplorable that could well be.

Jesus meets the wants of the mind: He shows us God. The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but He does dwell in Jesus. His love is of God most manifestly, so is His truth, His transparency of character. His humility is of God, and also His meekness and gentleness. Indeed, the whole character of Jesus Christ is just saturated with God, so that to see the one is to know the other. "The other"—but He is not another. The Father dwelleth in Him. The Father doeth the works. He and His Father are one.

Jesus meets the wants of the heart. I wish I could tell you how fully. I wish I could take you up a creaking stair, and show you one come from our hospital after a terrible and apparently a hopeless operation, yet her face beaming as if she had been in a palace of pleasure, instead of an abode of pain. "So safe, so calm, so satisfied." "JESUS has satisfied," that is the secret.

Jesus meets the wants of the conscience; and this in two ways. As to the past, His voice silences its cries, and that as nothing else can. A Roman Catholic priest, visiting a dying woman, was warned by a lady of a purer faith to put nothing between the parting soul and its God, and reminded that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The words went to his heart, as well they might from their own preciousness, and from the fact that they were the last words that had passed

his mother's lips. Some time afterwards they came back to him with such force that he renounced Romanism, and when it was his turn to die, it was the precious blood of Christ that was the comfort of his conscience as he passed away.

But those words in 1st John possibly, others certainly, point to another effect of the blood of Jesus besides that of answering for our sins and calming our fears. I mean the effect upon the life; its healing, helping, hallowing effect. It makes the conscience keenly sensitive to the slightest sin, and the will bravely strong in resisting it. And while the motive of holiness is thus found at the cross, the means of it are found in the Christ Himself. He speaks "in righteousness mighty to save." His ability knows no limit, it is to "the uttermost." By His providence often, by His grace oftener still, Jesus interposes between the tempted and the tempter, and shows that He can still work miracles of might. He is not merely able to save—He saves!

So humanity has wants, and Jesus meets them. But in order to do this humanity must meet Jesus. And how is this to be? How are men to see Jesus? By our doing Philip's work—and Philip was no talker, had no gifts that way at all that we know of—he just lived Christ, and so led men to confide in Him. Not so, alas! all Christians. When standing among those ruins, almost in a waste (for, save the acauthus, little grows there now; the roses of Pæstum, once famous, are gone

to happier places; its violets are faded, too), I saw a flaring tree all aflame with blossom, blossom and no green leaves to soften it. I asked what it was, and was told it was the Judas tree, and I thought how many Christians, how many Christian churches even, have so lived. Not far thence—at Salerno—they buried Hildebrand. But do not let us judge him, but judge ourselves, so shall we bring men to Jesus; so live that with joy, waiting for the Advent, they may say—

- "We would see Jesus," for the shadows lengthen Across this little landscape of our life;
- "We would see Jesus," our weak faith to strengthen For the last weariness, the final strife.
- "We would see Jesus," for life's hand hath rested With its dark touch upon both heart and brow; And tho' our souls have many a billow breasted, Others are rising in the distance now.
- "We would see Jesus," the great rock foundation Whereon our feet were set by sovereign grace; Nor life nor death, with all their agitation, Can thence remove us if we see His face.
- "We would see Jesus," other lights are paling
 Which for long years we have rejoiced to see.
 The blessings of our pilgrimage are failing;
 We would not mourn for them, we go to Thee.
- "We would see Jesus." This is all we're needing; Strength, joy, and willingness, come with the sight.
- "We would see Jesus," dying, living, pleading.
 Then welcome day, and farewell mortal night.



v. Puteoli.

- "Ah! little dream our listless eyes
 What glorious presence they despise
 While, in our noon of life,
 To power or fame we rudely press;—
 Christ is at hand, to scorn or bless,
 Christ suffers in our strife.
- "As to thy last Apostle's heart
 Thy lightning glance did once impart
 Zeal's never-dying fire;
 So teach us on Thy shrine to lay
 Our hearts, and let them day by day
 Intenser blaze, and higher."

KEBLE.



CHAP. V.

PUTEOLI.

As we came away from Puteoli, I was given a little card with some of the sea-weeds of the place, and marked—

"From thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome."—Acts xxviii. 13, 14.

Puteoli is called by Dr. Conybeare the Liverpool of Italy, as its neighbour, Baiæ, is called by him its Brighton. They were the sister ports of Naples, lying a little to the north of that gay and giddy city, where life teems so abundantly and is spent so hilariously.

The one is sacred to classic, the other chiefly to Christian associations; for once, among the grainships that came from Egypt, that earlier America, into Puteoli, this earlier Liverpool, conspicuous amongst other vessels as the only ones allowed to

carry into port their top-sail, the crowd, that as Seneca says, went down to meet them one day received—though, perhaps, they thought nothing of it—the man who has immortalized the spot and given to Puteoli by far its highest interest.

I asked one resident there whether any legends or traditions of St. Paul hang about the place. "No," she said, "none." And indeed all over Italy Paul seems to have been forgotten, or nearly so, so completely is his name overshadowed by that of Peter's keys and Paul's theology both account for this; but it is strange that while of the one whose traditions are so frequent, it is not even certain that he ever set foot in Rome or in Italy at all; of the other, so completely forgotten, we can trace the course and career almost every step of the way. Shipwrecked at Malta, in what is still known as St. Paul's Bay, the crew, soldiers, and prisoners, were transferred to one of the grain ships of Alexandria, and made for Sicily; thence, to avoid a gale, they took a circuit and touched at Rhegium, but did not land till they got to Puteoli. Here let us pause to consider the place, the persons associated with it, and the preaching of one, perhaps of more than one, of their number.

Both the history and the natural history of THE PLACE are full of interest. To begin with the latter, in driving from Naples one is struck by a tunnel bored through the tufa, through which public conveyances run, which is so long as to need to be

lighted by lamps even in the day. Nearer Puteoli itself you come upon a volcano, the Solfatara, almost extinct, but which in 1198 poured forth a stream of lava which reached the sea, and in which doubtless perished the temple of Hercules, that crowned the hill.

It is a safety valve for Vesuvius, being specially silent when the latter is active, and a little more disturbed when Vesuvius is in repose. But a more wonderful hill than the Solfatara is the Monte Nuovo, a mountain created by volcanic action. 1536-38 the district was convulsed by earthquake -the time when that other greater, grander convulsion took place, known in history as the Refor-In September, 1538, twenty shocks occurred in as many hours, driving the sea back two hundred paces, forming a gulf first of cold, then of hot water, covering the country with showers of ashes and black mud. Two days later two masses of red-hot pumice-stone emerged, the air became so dense that birds dropped and died, and when the eruption ceased, a mountain a mile and-a-half in circumference and 440 feet high had been formed, completely covering the villa of the Anjou kings, hospitals, baths, canals, and a village besides, and filling up more than half the Lucrine Lake.

So that you see in that district we are in the midst of volcanic action, and as this last eruption was probably not quite the first that occurred there, we can well understand how many a primitive people in earlier ages would be filled with terror as they came upon more tunnels than the one I have described, and upon wells which rise to a temperature of 182° Fahr. They called part of the ground Avernus—the caves seemed entrances to Orcus—and the vine-clad plains Elysium, by comparison.

But we, as we wander amongst scenes so convulsed and torn, should have other thoughts, less superstitious, but more devout. We should hear amongst them voices that witness to the continuing presence of God. His finger, His footsteps, are still here; and though His paths are not known, and their mystery makes it hard for us to see the mercy, yet we can see it by contrast. How good God must be to permit so few volcanoes (amidst so many sinful cities, too), and to permit so few eruptions of those that do exist.

Turning to the history—the ancient name of Puteoli was Dicæarchia, proving the Greeks to have been there, and from the farther east came the Tyrians, erecting their "factory." Later on we find the neighbouring Baiæ opening its luxurious arms to the sated citizens from the Metropolis, and villas for Cicero and Cæsar, and amphitheatres, one of them in wonderful preservation still, not for Greek plays like that at Pæstum, but for fights with lions and tigers, and with men too, soon arose to cover the spot with gladness or with gloom:—here we find Nero astonishing the Armenian King by descending into the Arena, and fighting; here,

too, Gennara (St. Januarius) and others were exposed to the wild beasts, but escaped untouched; they were then led away to a more certain martyrdom. There, too, arose the walls, pillars, pedestals of the temple of Isis: for here, as at Pompeii, the Romans, dissatisfied with their old deities, sought (alas! in vain) to find rest unto their souls in the worship of strange gods. Perhaps their trade with Egypt made it specially natural that an Egyptian god should have a temple here. But from its ruins we gladly turned to go down to the once mighty port whose ruined mole-its fourand-twenty arches all perished, while only thirteen of the piles remain where the few Christians of the place received that day their Apostle and ours. We want to see him, we want to know him: next, or almost next to Christ, he has exercised the most benignant influence ever exercised on the human mind. He stands upon the prow, he springs ashore. St. Paul is amongst the Christians of Puteoli.

How shall we describe him? Take up the epistle to the Romans, and you write him down a most powerful thinker; the epistle to the Corinthians, and read the chapter about charity, and you say, surely a born poet; that to the Galatians—the Galatians who misrepresented, mistrusted, ill-treated him—and you say, what wonderful patience; that to the Ephesians, what exalted spirituality; that to the Philippians, what ecstatic joy. His letter to the Colossians, reveals a wonderful singleness of pur-

pose: his letter to the Thessalonians a tenderness just as wonderful. On those to Timothy, I write, a true friend; on those to Titus, a true pastor; on that to Philemon, an impartial counsellor; on that to the Hebrews (in substance, if not in form, I think Paul's), a profound theologian. Or going back from his letters to his life, this chapter, and his interview with Jews and Romans, evince his courage; the last, the shipwreck-his calmness; the previous chapters of the imprisonment and trial, his cheerfulness; and those earlier still—the missionary chapters—his ardent, whole-souled zeal. They show him the church's administrator, as the epistles the church's theologian; clear, profound, his mind made up, his heart kindled, his soul burning with love to God and to man. And all this, or much of it. Paul was not naturally, but supernaturally.

Naturally, I can imagine his logic would indeed be always clear, his arguments able, possibly his poetical genius as beautiful. Naturally, he might have had something which would have made him the life of any society in which he found himself; but also, naturally, he would have been imperious, self-assertive, a bigot, an egotist, a grand inquisitor. That he was not—that the tree threw off this rough iron bark, was owing to a great change that had once come over him. There had been a movement in Paul's life as mighty as that in the land lying about Puteoli; a mountain had been thrown up loftier than the Monte Nuovo; a shipwreck had occurred greater

than his own at Valetta, and when he escaped safe to land, it was to find himself subdued, altered, changed, a wiser, but not a sadder man. You can fancy Saul of Tarsus stepping on shore, and his coming would have been the terror of the best, and the joy of the worst of men. But Saul of Tarsus was no more; he died (so to speak) on the Damascus road, and from the grave where they had buried him there had risen a new man, such an one as this Paul, soon to be "Paul the aged, and now also the prisoner of Jesus Christ."

And what grace made St. Paul, grace can make you. Jesus made Paul what he was; Jesus enabled Paul to do wondrous works, to suffer through his sorrowful but glorious life; Jesus stood by him as he preached, or as he bled; He guided his pen. and strengthened his heart; He was chained to this man closer and by a bond harder to break than the soldier who kept him. Iesus was all in all to Paul. Let Him be all in all to you. vourselves up to the constraint of the love of Jesus. to the sweet impulses of the love of Jesus, and you too may be, I will not say what St. Paul was, for every man has his own gift of God, but what God would have you be, so that your coming to a place will be hailed as its greatest hope, and looked back to as its most blessed memory.

But remember that the beginning of all this lies in a great change; a real right-down valid conversion. "There was in this man's life," says

Dr. Vaughan, "a great convulsion. He speaks of its cause himself in many places as the sight of Christ. Conscientious always, always religious, highly educated, well principled, moral, earnest, vehement (to a fault) in acting upon a sense of duty—these very qualities had led him to be a persecutor of the Christians. He had taken a public part in the brutal martyrdom of one of them . . . Paul's conversion was the hinge, the pivot, the turning-point of his life." From the day it took place "all things" became "new."

No wonder that the people of Puteoli greeted such a man; no wonder they begged him to stay with them, and as little that Publius, who owed Paul his life, and knew it, let him do so; and he "tarried with them seven days."

How I wish I had been there! How I wish I had been there seven hours, or seven minutes. and had once heard him, once heard this man of men. Not that I suppose he could have been much to hear: -small of stature, weak of sight, almost palsied, perhaps not at all the orator; his words owed their force to his matter and to his point. rather than to any charm of manner. How good for us and for the world that it is so! But how I wish I could "describe a preacher such as Paul." and could set him before you-set him before you in contrast to some others who once taught at this very spot:—Cicero, for example, leaving out his vanity; or Seneca, leaving out his covetousness;

or others who wrote and spoke here, what could they say? Surely not more than Plato, who declared of God that He was difficult to find, and impossible to make known if He were found. Or St. Paul's countryman, Philo, who on this very spot led an embassy to Augustus. Professor Jowett thus contrasts him with St. Paul:—"Philo was a Jew, Paul a Christian; Philo a philosopher, Paul a preacher; Philo an eclectic, Paul spake as the Spirit gave him utterance. The one produced a system for the Jews, the other proclaimed a universal religion. The one may have sent a few more solitaries to the banks of the Nile, the other changed the world."

Take another Oriental, Apollonius of Tyana, for he, too, came here to talk his platitudes, but hardly to reform a single life, while St. Paul, and those with him, turned the world upside down. When we remember that one of Socrates' pupils was the dissolute Alcibiades, and know that one of Seneca's was Nero, who murdered his mother on this very spot, we cannot be too thankful that the world, in part at least, exchanged them and their speculations for St. Paul and his doctrine.

Clear as the light of day is St. Paul as to what we must do to be saved. I wish you were as clear. If Luther's article of a standing or falling church be thought too strong, hear Archbishop Trench: "We were assured some time ago in a volume, which excited great indignation in Christian England, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone has

never been accepted by more than a section of the church. Be this as it may, it is some satisfaction to find that it is the doctrine of St. Paul. Here is the question and here is the answer.* It is not, believe, and in addition to this do certain works, and then for the merit's sake of that faith and of those works thou shalt be saved. The apostle was not afraid of the gospel he had come to preach, and would not clog it with conditions."

Let those who have misgivings about a future state hear the pæan of the soldier as he drops the sword, and grasps Heaven's own palm:—"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

Let those who doubt the divinity of Christ, hear St. Paul proclaim Him high over all, head over all, "God over all." It would be an immense gain to the thought of the world, aye, and to its style too, if people would try to master the master-treatises of this master mind. I do not say his only; we want his mind tempered with St. John's heart, nor can we dispense with the honest hand of St. Peter, and the stroke of those practised oarsmen, James and Jude, if we are to get the boat "safe to land." And oh! friends, you that are trembling and plunging in the dark, deep waters, what an immense gain it

^{• &}quot;What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—Acts xvi. 30, 31.

were to you to have such a firm clear mind to guide your movements; one who knows his own mind, if you don't know yours; one who is so unlike Cicero and Seneca and the rest, because the questions they can only ask, he can answer; and passions and appetites they can only dissect and describe, he can curb and control; and how? Because he has taken into his heart a life which is not his own; a life which is as much higher than his as his is than that of many men; a life divine—the life of Christ. You take it too, and your life may be like His, glorified and blest.





VI.

The Rome of the Cæsars.

Oh, Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance! Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

CHILDE HAROLD.



CHAP. VI.

THE ROME OF THE CÆSARS.

"Part of iron and part of clay."—Dan. ii. 33.

"Part of iron and part of clay:" like so many characters; like so many kingdoms! It is of kingdoms it is said here, the ten kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was to be divided. But what is true of them, in a sense is true of it also. Rome itself is "part of iron and part of clay," but THE IRON FIRST.

We see traces of the iron that was in the blood, in the language and literature of Rome, that marvellous language which is the basis, more or less, of most of the languages of civilization, and to which itself recourse was had long after it was dead or dying. In the literature, that rich literature which flowered in Ennius (the first of the poets), and bore fruit on to Bæthius (the last of the philosophers), which ranged over every subject and employed every style, and the impulse of which abides unto this day.

We trace the iron still more in its history, the

most marvellous history in the world surely, which tells how, from a single city—as from a single cell in some physical formation—there grew a kingdom that swept in other cities first; other lands next; and by-and-bye vast tracts of territory almost extending from England to India. Only think of one city, and a little city (for its first king could put but three thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry into the field), spreading and spreading till its name became the synonym for the whole world: so true was the forecast of the prophet.* And we see this iron mark in the very ruins which are left to us, and which I have undertaken to make the topic of this chapter. I feel dismayed, indeed, in the attempt -dismayed in proportion as you are expectantdismayed, not at the poverty, but at the profusion of my materials, so that after days of meditation, I approach the subject still with trembling. enough of this.

We had been to the French and Italian Riviera, had seen the palaces of Genoa frown in storm, and the towers of Pisa flash in sunshine; and when I had "been there, I would also see Rome." And Rome, to one whose youth had been occupied with its literature, was the city of the Cæsars. The city that burst upon me one March morning was fair and beautiful, its domes and pinnacles were glorious, and its streets, narrow though they were, so ex-

^{* &}quot;The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: for a smuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things."—Dan. ii. 40.

quisite in their adornment, were a delight to tread. But this was not my Rome, the Rome of my reading, the Rome of the Classics. It was a modern, or at most a mediæval city. "Ancient Rome had neither cupola nor campanile." I must sweep from the landscape all that is most characteristic of it, and replace churches by temples, monasteries by forums, and balconies of that long straight street, the Corso, by the avenue, crowned by archways, that once led towards the Capitol.

Where modern Rome chiefly stands was once an open place, the Campus Martius: and it is beyond it, in parts greatly given up to desolation, that we must imagine the Basilicas and palaces where Cæsars gave their judgments and held their courts. Yet even over these martial fields the old town encroached, and beyond them one comes upon ruins, vast and ancient enough to satisfy the most exorbitant. First you come, in the Piazza de Colonna. upon the column of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. who, if philosophy could have saved the Empire, would have saved it. You have to go but two hundred paces, and back two hundred years, for the founding of the Pantheon, a temple built by Agrippa, in the reign of Augustus, B.C. 37, and dedicated by him to all the gods. Little did he think that a few centuries later (it was in the reign of the Greek Emperor Phocas, 608) it would be consecrated as a Christian church. Its portico of Corinthian columns stands in unrivalled grandeur

to this day, and the light from the single aperture in its low dome pours in upon the graves of Raphael, Consalvi, and Victor Emmanuel, to find walls as firm as when the masters of the world erected them.

The little temple of Vesta, so called, with its twenty Corinthian columns all standing but one, is, next to the Pantheon, the most complete of the city's antiquities. But more interesting are the forums. Five of them there were, and the ruins of two of them strike the eye of every traveller. forum of Trajan, where that Emperor's majestic column looks down on the broken friezes and pillars, prepares one for the more glorious Forum Romanum, the first and the last thing every one wishes to see in Rome. Three temples have left their ruins on the southern slope of the Capitol: one dedicated to a false god-Saturn; one to a man, a demigod, as all the Emperors were in the eyes of their subjects—Vespasian; and another to a virtue deified by their superstitious imagination -Concord.

The site of that of Saturn is marked by eight Ionic columns; that of Vespasian, by three Corinthian pillars of white marble; and that of Concord, by a wide raised space with coloured marbles. In front of it stands the Arch of Septimius Severus, and before it once stood the oldest equestrian statue in the world (it now fronts the Capitol), that of M. Aurelius. Passing thence down the *Clivus Capitolinus* you are soon on the

Via Sacra, which Horace loved so dearly; the Via Sacra, up which so many a procession passed;—the conqueror carried up to the Capitol, with vanquished victims behind him. One such triumph is familiar to us all, and its emblems are still before our eyes in the next arch we come to, down whose sides the deep bas relief shows the familiar form of the seven-branched candlestick, trumpets, and other trophies borne from the temple at Jerusalem. Yes; this is the arch of Titus. Opposite to it is the Basilica of Constantine, a hall of justice, and behind it the outline of an older court, that of the mighty Julius; while hard by is the spot where Marc Antony spoke and wept over his mangled body, which there and then his soldiers burnt.

A few paces farther on would take us to the vastest ruin in the world, the Flavian Colosseum, which you have to imagine unbroken to its fifth tier, and adorned in every niche with statues. have but to cross the road to be in the palace of the Cæsars. I shall never forget the emotions with which we threaded our way through some halls and courts and galleries—these of Augustus, of Germanicus those, and yonder of Tiberius. one's reverence for antiquity is called out by the site of a temple dedicated long ages before the Cæsars lived by the first of the Romans, Romulus. to Jupiter Stator. And soon one is called to shudder as he is bidden to the baths of one of the last of them, the despot, Caracalla; or to the ruins of the golden house of Nero which he built on the site of the city he himself is supposed to have burnt. We might take you to aqueducts miles in length, and some of them conveying water to the city unto this day; or to obelisks brought from Egypt by Emperor after Emperor, which in every part of the city point to the departed greatness of the Rome of the Cæsars.

But enough, and far too much, I feel, to show how well Daniel's text describes the place and nation "part of iron and part of clay."

THE IRON. Every stone in those ruins proclaims it. For to me every stone here seems to be a tomb-stone with that sublimest epitaph:—"Stop, traveller, you tread upon a hero." Heroes certainly the ancient Romans were; and heroism is no mean virtue. Bravado is a very different thing. I used to teach my boys to pray God to make them brave. Probably half the sins of men come from cowardice, from incapacity to resist the currents of common opinion, and this is so because half of us are but half men. We need God to baptize us with the spirit of bravery—true calm courage to meet life's ills and to combat its real evils.

The heroism of the Romans was accompanied by another soldier's quality—obedience. It was told Cæsar that the tenth legion had revolted; he went forth and addressed them as citizens instead of soldiers. They were instantly at his knees. It was men like those, born to obey, who were born also to be the masters of the world. Just as the followers of Loyola promised to go anywhere, and to do any thing (with no reason asked) at the bidding of the reigning pope.

Friends, we want to-day obedience like that of Cæsar's soldiers and Loyola's followers, only we want it given to God. Such obedience for any one else it were a crime to ask.

But ancient Rome soon developed statesmanlike as well as soldierlike qualities. With a mind clear, precise, order-loving, she laid down a body of laws which is at the basis of every legal code perhaps in the world: the tabularium, or record office, shown them in the Capitol where the bronze plates with the decrees of the senate were kept reminds us of an authority that ran round the world. contributed to the education of the world," says Dr. Temple, "her admirable spirit of order. her had been given the genius of government. had been trained to it by centuries of difficulty, and when she began to aim consciously at the Empire of the world she had already learnt her lesson. She had learnt it as the Hebrews had learned theirs, by an enforced obedience to her own law. And law was the lesson which Rome was intended to teach the world." This soldierlike obedience and statesmanlike power of government was sustained by thrift, honesty, and rigid temperance. "Young men were not permitted to drink wine till they had attained the age of thirty, and it

was totally forbidden to women."* They rejected with horror a law which proposed the building of a public theatre, and the exhibition of plays like the Greeks: and the food of the plebeians was bread and salt, and their drink water. No wonder that they were sought as arbiters between rival cities, and became the conquerors of other nations. He who would excel must learn to subdue self. "Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." There is only one thing better still that both the city and the soul should be subject to God alone. "The king's daughter is all glorious within." Yes, such principle as the true love to God and such an attachment as is drawn out by the life and death of God manifest in the flesh, is as much more precious than mere self-control, however soldierlike and statesmanlike, as gold is more precious than iron. One cannot be content with iron who has once seen gold, nor with virtue who has once known holiness. For if you had all, all the virtues desired, you lack the motive power to sustain them. This is what we want, true genuine godliness; and it is only born of God. He must He must sustain it. We are thankful for give it. the iron, but not content with it, even were it pure, even were it unmixed with miry clay. But it was not: in a world left to itself it never is. kingdom of Modern Europe and the Empire out of which they sprang was "part of iron and part of

^{*}Lemprière.

CLAY." We have tried to do justice to the former, it is now our mournful task to touch upon the latter.

Fancy, if on your next visit to London, the shopman who spreads his silks before you, were a bought and branded slave; that the man who decorated your house in high art, or who painted your portrait, were a slave: that the very lawyer or physician whom you went up to consult—that, in fact every second man you met-were a slave; that there were nearly two million slaves in London: that would be just the state of things, and we think just the number found in Rome. It is hard to believe what Kingsley says, that the African slave trade was but a brook beside this river, and that the Southerner was a moral heaven above the unmanly wretch who styled himself a senator or a Clarissimus; but when he tells of 10,000 human beings (10,000 Greeks, too) bought and sold for the Roman market in a little place like the island of Delos alone, in a single day, we begin to see one of the plague spots which ate as did a cancer. Happily that is an evil that England has done with, but none too soon.

Nor too soon did she check the desire among us for the sight of blood. She had to check it in the prize-ring, in the bull ring, in the cock pit. But after all, what were they to the Amphitheatre? Fancy going to town again to find all London, at least 70,000 Londoners going to the theatre—a theatre provided at the expense of the state, and to

witness indecencies provided by the state too—and cruelties added to indecencies. Even before the republic came to an end, before the death of Cato, "the last of the Romans," Pompey—and he was one of the better sort of men—had brought five hundred lions on to the stage, and then, as a novelty, eighteen elephants; and the poor creatures went whining round the ring with the lances in them, so that people felt as though they were half human; and human beings were tortured by hundreds of thousands.

What is that just outside the Colosseum? A well, you say, an old fountain rather. What, like the brazen laver in Solomon's court? Well—yes—but for no priest: for slaves, felons, soldiers, compelled to fight unto the death in sight of the senators, the knights, the plebeians, the ladies of Rome.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand; his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony!
And his drooped head sinks gradually low;
And, from his side, the last drops, ebbing slow
Through the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone!
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch
who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes Were with his heart, and that was far away: He recked not of the life he lost, or prize, But where his rude hut by the Danube lay; There, were his young barbarians all at play;
There, was their Dacian mother!—he, their sire,
Butchered, to make a Roman holiday!
All this rushed with his blood! Shall he expire,
And unaverged? Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire!

Thank God, that came to an end, and what Aurelius' philosophy and Titus' clemency could not effect, the fixed resolve of Christian love overcame for ever.

But the love of pleasure, "the pleasures of sin," is still deep in human nature; and there have been symptoms not a few, that even Christian England will have more jealously to guard all opportunities to vice. If we were silent about these things the very stones would cry out. These stones of Nero's golden house, for instance, what terrible tales would they have to tell of the sensuality which always goes hand in hand with cruelty. But I draw a veil over that branch of my subject. I refuse to pollute my imagination by the touch of this miry clay.

You have heard about the frugality of the earlier Romans. No words, no tears, can tell the complete change that came over them. Milo—Cicero's friend, not his enemy Clodius, mark you; but his cherished friend—owed half-a-million of money, yet spent £30,000 on a feast and games to secure his election to office. The desire for popularity, the desire for pleasure, together helped forward the tremendous extravagance, and this led to

rapacity. It used to puzzle me how Titus could be held up as a paragon of virtue, though he sacked Jerusalem, and carried away the gold and silver. The fact was, they ceased to have any conscience about other nations, they had little enough about their own. They would move heaven and earth to get a province only that they might plunder it: and those statues—so priceless, so beautiful—that adorn the Vatican, the Capitol, the Torlonia, they lose half their beauty when we remember that they were many of them stolen from their rightful owners.

The fact was, and this was the root of all the rest, they had lost all self-control. They did not know what it was to put limits to their lusts. "Woe to them that add house to house." Why, the palace of the Cæsars is just that,—house added to house on ill-gotten soil at the expense of a down-trodden people. Here Augustus began, and Tiberius went on, and Caligula enlarged, till "all the palace" which Paul wrote about meant a space large enough to build a town upon, and adorned with wealth enough to buy freedom for the slaves.

But they would not do it; they would not put a check to their unbridled passions, any of them, and "because of these things the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." And it did come, says Kingsley. It came with Alaric. "The thicker the hay the easier to be mowed." What terms would he take? "All your gold. All your

silver. All your barbarian slaves." Note that, he would deliver his own flesh and blood. What then will you leave us? "Your lives." Then came the end. He marched on Rome; one of the gates was thrown open to him at midnight, and for five dreadful days and nights the wicked city expiated the sins of centuries. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Debating societies discuss whether England will fall as Rome fell. Nay, whether she has begun to It is a tremendous question, and a most tremendous phase of it is this, that we are part of this mass, and are helping either to hasten or to hinder the decay. Hundreds of Englishmen see, thousands of Englishmen think of the ruins of Rome; but how many of them or how few consider (in the words of a Roman poet) that "when my neighbour's house is in flames mine is in danger." My brother, if we are to be saved it will be so as by fire. Are we made of the stuff to stand it? Are we built of stone or of straw? Nav-for that is the suggestion of my text—are we built of both, "part of iron and part of clay?" Like so many characters, I said, and fatal to them. These mixed characters are the marring of the state, the marring of the soul. Men that do good with one hand, and undo it with the other, do well with one hand, and ill with the other; help the good with one hand, hinder it with the other; come to Christ with one hand, or one foot rather, and shrink away from Him with the other. What is to become of them? What saith the Scriptures? "I know that thou art neither cold nor hot." Let us try to cease the folly and sin of being half Christ's and half our own, that Satan may no more be able to mutter over us—"part of iron and part of clay." If we do this, if we become more wholly Christ's, we shall not have visited the city of the Cæsars in vain.



VII.

The Rome of the Martyrs.

"The earth to them was as a rolling bark Which bore them to eternity."

O blessed martyrs, ye who have been tried by fire, like fine gold, you are crowned with the diadem and the crown which cannot fade away, because you have bruised under your feet the serpent's head."

TERTULLIAN.



CHAP. VII.

THE ROME OF THE MARTYRS.

"And others had trial of cruel mockings and acourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."—Heb. xi. 36-38.

THE age of the Cæsars was the age of the Martyrs, but the Rome of the one was hardly the Rome of the other. His Rome was a place of splendours and of palaces. Their's was a place of shadows, of prisons, and of subterranean cells. His Rome was surrounded by walls, and defended by soldiers. Their's was beyond the city wall, but had a better protection—its darkness and its death.

In a word, the Rome of the Cæsars was the city; the Rome of the early church was the catacombs. In them, and in prisons, in churches, and in the Colosseum we shall come upon traces of the early church and of the Martyrs of Rome.

The word CATACOMBS was originally applied to a vault under the Basilica of St. Sebastian on the Appian way—where the supposed remains of St. Peter and St. Paul were deposited, when recovered from certain Greeks who were carrying them off by stealth to their country. It has in later times been applied to the immense network of subterranean passages or galleries found in every direction outside the walls of Rome.

We went to that of St. Agnes, entering it from a vineyard down a steep staircase, at the bottom of which torches were lit, and we found ourselves in a sort of grotto about eight feet high, and from three to five wide. One might compare it to a honevcomb, from the number of its cells. In the tufa walls of these galleries the Christian dust was laid. There are about five graves in each tier; they are eight feet long, and when undisturbed are closed with marble slabs or tiles, on which inscriptions or Christian emblems are cut. The inscriptions (11.000 have been found), for all their rude latin, are often very touching, and oh! so much fuller of hope than those to be found in the Pagan burial places. The fish —the familiar monogram for Christ—the vine, the palm, the sheep, the dove with the olive branch, the anchor (emblem of hope), the ship (emblem of the church), the loaves and flask (emblem of the body and blood of Christ), with here and there a mosaic (e.g., Lazarus raised), are among the inscriptions.

Besides the loculi in the walls, are arcosolia, con-

sisting of an arch over a grave, or a sort of apse. There are also sepulchral chambers, and crypts or chapels evidently for worship.

When I tell you that sixty catacombs have been already traced, and that each is supposed to contain 100,000 graves, you may imagine how vast are the ramifications of this marvellous network.

Over the entrances to not a few of these some of the greatest churches in Rome have been built, but to me it is more touching to remember that the catacombs themselves were churches. here and there, these were built with or without permission in very early times, yet during the fitful fever of persecution—it was an intermittent fever, and times of security would be followed by times of attack—one might see coming by various roads, here a group of slaves, there of workmen, and yonder a soldier, and anon a chamberlain from the palace. like Diocletian's chief chamberlain Lucianus, assembling at morning dawn to sing and pray, and read together the precious parchments which the tyrant had just ordered every Christian to give up. The sight of such simple service, combined with such sincere devotion, is to me a sublime sight, and the contrast with it when we return to the upper world and to other churches is sad and humiliating.

The most ancient is said to be that of SS. Nereus and Achilleus, said to have been opened by Flavia Domitilla, daughter or niece of Flavius Clemeus, the first of the imperial family who suffered martyr-

dom. In it, besides those from which it has its name, lie the remains of Petronella, a Roman lady of the family of the Aurelii, sometimes called Peter's daughter, but at most only his child in the faith. Arabesque ornaments surrounded it, and near is a *luminare* which served to light a crypt with marble floor.

We are not to think that their underground places of meeting secured these earlier covenanters from pursuit and attack. The catacombs themselves would soon correct any such hopeful impression, for one of the favourite devices scratched in its simple way upon their walls is that of Daniel in the den, another that of the three youths in the furnace, emblem of what their companions suffered; and elsewhere, you find engraved a martyr, with his hands behind him, tied to a pole in the form of a cross, surmounted by a triple crown, and about to be slain by a soldier with upraised sword, and over it his name—Achilleus.

In the catacomb of Pretextatus are inscriptions to Saint Januarius, Agapetus, and Felicissimus, deacons of the Pope, who suffered martyrdom here in A.D. 162. And in that of St. Calixtus were interred the bodies of Eutychianus, A.D. 275; Anternus, A.D. 235; Fabrianus, bishop and martyr, A.D. 236; and Lucius, bishop and martyr, A.D. 232; so that some of the bishops of Rome themselves were amongst the Martyrs of Rome.

But let us leave these scenes of shadows, and

emerge upon the upper air. There we shall find tokens of sorrow in all directions.

As we pursue our way, let us ponder on the causes of persecution, and the occasions of it here. The root-cause is self-will, that root of so many evils. Self-will itself rooted in self-opinionatedness, which says:—my ideas must express the reality of things, the ideas of others where they differ from them show unreality and error. But error is sin, and leads to sin, therefore it ought to be restrained, prevented, and if possible, stamped out. Having the power I ought also to have the will to do this. In this way persecution—a pain to most minds in itself—becomes invested with an inverted sanctity, and cruelty becomes a duty.

This, I take it, is the Genesis of persecution wherever it is found; and I pray you not merely to pity *Christian* martyrs, pity *all* martyrs; and not merely to hate persecution of what you call truth, but to hate all persecution. Like God, be good to the unthankful and to the evil.

Those who can only weep for the persecution of Protestants, but who could persecute Roman Catholics, have much more cause to blush than to weep. They have never learnt to hate persecution itself, but only persecution when turned against themselves or their party. God give you "great largeness of heart," and then you will be sure to have a soul above all persecution.

The mistaken principle I have described may

account for the fact that among a people so tolerant as the Romans, and during the reigns of men so good as some of the Cæsars, persecution could take place at all. The fact is, that the Romans were not so tolerant as supposed. They did allow other religions, just as they allowed other nations, and no But Christianity was not a nation, and it puzzled men like Tacitus and Pliny how it could be a religion. Christians, whether they had once been Jews or Pagans, in either case had left the God of their fathers: it was a question whether they could be considered to have any God of their own; rather were they not "Atheists?" Besides, they were dissenters of double dve; they not only disclaimed the gods, but the Emperor. He, you know, was deified as soon as he died, sometimes sooner, and every body of every religion, and the very philosophers too, thought it no harm to sanction this folly; but the Christian refused. In his ears rung the words, "Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." Incense, prayer, and offering were not Cæsar's, but Christ's; and he dared not vield to man what belonged to God. They all might conform but himself: he must stand out and And so it often happened (as it happens now with but some shades of difference) that a Christian soldier found himself in a minority of one in the camp, and so with a Christian servant in the palace. They dared to be true to Christ,

as God grant you may be in workshops, or in banks, in barracks, or at college. This daring, like that of the guards at Waterloo, led through a furious fire under which thousands fell, but at last, like that of the guards, it won the day; and so will you, my friends. If you be true to God in Christ, in the long run you will conquer, and at the last you will be crowned, "for there is no man that hath forsaken parents, or children, or houses, or lands for My sake, but shall receive an hundredfold in this present world, and in the world to come life everlasting."

The first record of the persecution of the Christians comes to us from the hands of an enemy. Tacitus, the philosophic heathen, in his life of the Emperor Nero, says of this wretched and abandoned monarch -who was no better than a crowned charioteer, a crowned actor, the murderer of his own wife, the murderer of his own mother—that a fire broke out in Rome, which destroyed a great part of the capital, and that nothing could remove from men's minds the impression that the Emperor himself was the incendiary—himself the author of the destruction of his own capital. He tried races. drove his chariot in the ring; he tried games, but all to no purpose. At length, he said, everybody hates the Christians, everybody scouts them as atheists; everybody detests them as morose and bigoted. will accuse them of this crime. And he did accuse them, and let loose the passions of their accusers.

Some, says Tacitus—who pitied, although he hated the Christians—"were nailed on crosses, and others sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs; others, smeared over with combustible materials, were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night. The gardens of Nero were deserted for the melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied with a horse race, and honoured with the presence of the Emperor, who mingled with the populace in the dress and attitude of a charioteer." We do not know the names of those who perished at that time, but it is more than suspected that there were one or two amongst them more illustrious than Rome could ever furnish afterwards.

After he landed at Puteoli, as we saw, St. Paul was conveyed to Rome, and there remained in a sort of prison house, till at last brought before Cæsar's judgment seat and released. He returned to Asia Minor (as his letters to the Colossians and Philemon say he hoped to do), and there it is conjectured he was again arrested, and again sent to Rome. When he wrote again, he was "now ready to be offered;" that is to say, he was expecting death. It is said that he wrote that second letter to Timothy in the Mamertine prison, the most dismal cell perhaps ever inhabited by man. We descended a broken stair under a little door, hard by the forum to find ourselves in a damp and noisome dungeon in which the human frame could hardly remain erect. There, or let us hope in some

less miserable place, this noble soul wrote the last of his glorious epistles; and thence he was led to execution, probably not so far from the city as the Tre Fontane, the spot now shown, the very legend of which is its condemnation.

Friends may have been allowed to collect his relics, and may have deposited them on the Via Ostia, where stands the magnificent church that bears his name. As we gaze on its marble pavement, the most perfect in the world; the roof, with its carved wood work; the aisles, with the forest of pillars; and all the other magnificence of San Paolo fuori Muri,* we can hardly help bitterly recalling the words of our Lord, "Ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." + But better. as we reflect on the great man whose ashes are there or somewhere near, to give diligence to see that we are "on the foundation of the apostles and prophets:" that we "continue steadfast in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship." The best St. Paul's Church in the world is a church thoroughly Pauline in doctrine; as free from superstitious bigotry, as clear of sentimental folly, as firm in the liberty of justification by faith, and as earnest in the life of holiness, which is the life of Christ.

St. Paul's beyond the Walls.
 † Matthew xxiii. 29, 30.

To pass to other scenes, to the companion church. for instance, that of St. Peter. We were shown there the portrait of Petronella, a Roman lady, who nobly confessed Christ. She was not the only one who showed the courage of a man in those dread times. St. Cecilia, whom some of us have thought of as a mere synonym for song, was another. Paschal I. bore her body from the catacombs in A.D. 230: and Stefano Maderno, in the 17th century, rendered in marble the form as it was found ages before in her grave clothes. They showed us an ancient house, possibly her dwelling place. There, at sixteen, she was given in marriage to Valerian, a heathen, but converted in answer to her prayers and the preaching of Urban. He came in, and found her singing hymns of praise for this grace given him, which he did not think she had heard of. They were beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to idols. She, condemned by a prefect, was shut up in the bath. God sent a cooling shower. lictors struck her thrice, after which she lived three days, and preached and won souls to Christ. the third day, visited by Pope Urban, she commended to his care the poor she had nourished, bequeathed to him the palace in which she had lived; then thanking God that He considered her, a humble woman, worthy to share the glory of His heroes, with her eyes fixed on the open heavens, she departed to her Heavenly Bridegroom November 2nd, A.D. 280.

St. Agnes was another, whose story is all too sad to tell. She was but thirteen when martyred, after which her parents, "with all joy," say the Acta Santonun, "laid her in the catacombs." She appeared to them with a lamb by her side, saying, "I am in heaven, living with these virgins my companions, near Him whom I have so much loved." She rests in the shrine of a church on the margin of the catacomb that bears her name.

And what shall I more say? Time would fail me to tell of St. Clement and his relative of the Flavian house, of St. Catherine of Alexandria, of St. Alexis and St. Antonius, of St. Serverus and St. Serverianus, of St. Sixtus, and four deacons who perished under Valerian; and of Simplicius, Fonda-nus, and Beatrix, who were hurled from a rock in the days of Diocletian. At the very outbreak of the previous persecution, the Roman Bishop Flavius suffered martyrdom. "The Bishops of the metropolis under the very eye of the Emperor." writes Neander, "became naturally the first mark of persecution. For could men expect to put down the Christians in the provinces, if their Bishops were tolerated in Rome? Cornelius, who, at the hazard of his life, entered on his office while Decius was yet emperor, was first banished, then condemned to death: Lucius, who had the Christian courage to succeed him, became his successor also in exile and martyrdom;" and some of the sufferers at Rome who had already been confined for a year, wrote to

Cyprian of Carthage:—"What more glorious and blessed lot can by God's grace fall to man than, amidst tortures and fear of death itself, to confess God the Lord, with lacerated bodies and a spirit departing, yet free to confess Christ the Son of God, to become fellow-sufferers with Christ in the name of Christ. If we have not yet suffered we are ready to suffer. Pray then, beloved Cyprian, that the Lord would daily confirm and strengthen each one of us more and more."

We have not endeavoured to heighten the effect of these facts by turning them into pictures, nor have we allowed ourselves to introduce a single name outside the limits of Rome; neither Blandina nor Perpetua, nor any of the familiar names in Gaul or in Africa. We have spoken of Rome only; but to Rome was brought one who had been a bishop, far away in the east, in Antioch, his name—you know it—was Ignatius.

The people were met in the Colosseum, that mammoth Amphitheatre, where a greater number of spectators assembled than ever met in any other place on earth. There were the Senators, with the Emperor in the midst, guarded from the beasts by the ivory rods and nets; then there sat the knights, the populace, the plebs, and the women of Rome, over whom the sailors of the fleet drew the awning to screen them from the sun. Their jaded appetites were that day to be regaled with a new sensation. Tired of the shows and sea fights in the boats hauled up on the stage

there—tired of the gladiators even—they were to enjoy the savage pleasure of seeing one of the men who never graced the arena with his presence, one of the hated Christians, exposed to view. was brought in at one end of the stage, and at the same time a hungry lion, fresh from the pretorian camp yonder, was uncaged and let loose at the other. Paul had been delivered from the mouth of the lion, so at Puteoli was St. Genara, but Christ wished to show that whether He interposed for them or not His servants would serve Him; they would not worship the Emperor's gods, nor bow down to the image that he had set up. So the beast and his victim met. It was but for a moment, and Ignatius was in heaven: beneath, the arena, with the yell of seventy thousand fiends; above, the heaven ringing with the welcome of ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of angels.

I might have extended this outline greatly, if I had gone beyond this single city; also if I had troubled you with Pliny's letter, Hadrian's and Antonimus' rescript (for all these men, the noblest heroes of the past who ever lived, were concerned in the persecution), but one rescript I must quote. It is that which closes the last and worst of all the persecutions. Diocletian had put all the power of his unrivalled capacity of government into massacring these his innocent subjects; and Gallienus was his evil angel. But what was the good of it? The Emperors had tried they said, had tried

their best, to bring men back to the religion of their fathers; but as the majority of the Christians persisted in their opinions, and it was now evident that they could not worship their own Deity and at the same time the gods of the nation, the Emperors had resolved to extend to them their wonted clemency. They might once more be called Christians, and might have their assemblies, provided they did nothing contrary to the statutes. "Let them now, because experiencing our indulgence, pray to their God for our prosperity and their own."

A wonderful testimony, I think, to the patience of Christianity and the power of Christ. The persecutors saw then what a later persecutor, the Queen of Madagascar, saw in our own day, when she owned that all her efforts to extirpate Christianity had been in vain. Such testimonies should reassure our hearts, and strengthen mightily our faith in our holy religion.



VIII.

The Rome of the Popes.

"There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilisation. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of l'epin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable."

MACAULAY.



CHAP. VIII.

THE ROME OF THE POPES.

"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."—Revelation xvii. 18.

THE woman is a city. That is one point settled for us in what else might be an impenetrable prophetic mystery. The city is "the seven heads and ten horns" which are seven mountains and ten king-That localises the description to the city of doms. the seven hills, whose empire covers many kingdoms. This is another point settled for us. Further, the woman is not the city in its pristine glory. beast "was and is not (Rev. xvii. 8) and yet is." was even then going "into perdition," or, (xiii. 3) "as it were wounded to death and his deadly wound was healed." And another beast arose that had power to conjure with his name, so that, when the beast himself was weakened or even gone, his image might be strengthened and be worshipped.

The vision appears in two forms. In chap. xiii. the

second power, a spiritual power evidently, is represented as a second beast. In chap, xvii, the same power is represented as a woman arrayed in scarlet, sitting on a scarlet-covered beast. There is mystery about her, there is blasphemy about her, there is cruelty about her. She is "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Iesus." She is, as Mr. Guinness * well shows, contrasted with another woman, another city, the New Jerusalem, the Bride united to the Lamb, as she, the harlot, is strangely united to the kings of the world and committed to the thraldom of the beast. The city, surely, is Rome; the wound, Rome's destruction by the barbarians; and the woman, the power that rose out of the imperial ashes, the mystery and mother of abominations of the earth; in a word, the woman of Rev. xvii., the second beast of chap. xiii., is the Papacy. But it is not for us to attempt further the elucidation of this prophecy, nor fully to follow the history of the city, but to note its salient points as we grope our way about the streets of the city itself.

The interest of the Rome of the Popes, widely diffused as it is, circles mainly around TWO CENTRES, ST. JOHN IN THE LATERAN for the one, ST. PETER'S IN THE VATICAN for the other.

We went to St. John Lateran the second morning I was in Rome, to hear a mass for the Pope's brother. The church, a vast edifice, with statues

^{*} See his very able book, "Approaching End of the Age."

on its summit so life-like that they seem as though they might at any moment move from their pedestals and march through the air into the city, stands solemnly almost alone on the edge of a vast solitude. It was built for St. Sylvester by Constantine. The place was no solitude then. There stood there, amongst other dwellings, the house of a Roman family named Laterani. One of them, Plautius, conspiring against Nero, the Emperor seized the palace. This house Constantine gave to the Bishop Sylvester, to be his episcopal palace; and with his own royal hands dug the foundation of a sacred Basilica on the adjoining ground.

We have often used the word Basilica. from the Greek for King. The masculine is used of a nobleman * or courtier; the feminine, of the The word is employed generally of churches whose style of architecture is that of imperial courts, and especially of five churches at Rome (some add eight more) which have patriarchal honours. was in one of these (St. Lorenzo) Pio Nono was laid the other day, when the sad tumult occurred. Another is St. Paul's, vision of beauty the most beautiful; another, St. Peter's, of magnificence the most magnificent; another Santa Maria Maggiore. the most venerable of them all, built, it is said, on the spot where snow fell one August, A.D. 352. Chapel of the Sacrament was repaired by Pius IX. at enormous cost. Beneath it lie the remains of

^{*} John iv. 46.

the Princess Borghese (Lady Gwendaline Talbot). Crowds, almost equal to that at her funeral, were wont to come here to a mass by the Pope at Whitsuntide, and to another service on Christmas Eve. In front stands a column from the Basilica of Constantine, and near it a canon and cross, in memory, alas! of absolution given to Henri IV. on his abjuring Protestantism.

But we must come back to the LATERAN, less beautiful though it be, most interesting of all for its history. Note its statue of Constantine and its Porta Santa. Its heavy piers encase the columns of the old Basilica; its left aisle glitters with the Corsini chapel, in the vault beneath which is the exquisite Pietà of Montanti; its right aisle has the Torlonia chapel, which cost £65,000.

Pope Gregory VI., who confessed to have purchased his elevation, left Rome for Germany accompanied by a young man named Hildebrand, the latter returned to Rome when Leo IX. was made Pope. Invested by him and his successors with offices amounting to the administration of the papacy, on the death of Alexander, Hildebrand ordered a public fast. "The metropolis of Christdendom," writes one, "seemed to bow in profound humiliation under the mighty hand of God. The Lateran church was crowded to excess with devout worshippers. Suddenly the solemn service was interrupted by a loud shout from the whole of the vast concourse, as if through some unlooked for

but irresistible impulse, 'Hildebrand is Pope, Saint Peter hath chosen him.' This was the work of an instant; but the deed was none the less surely done. Hildebrand felt secure in his new position; he could afford to apply for the Emperor's approval, and he forthwith secured it. He was consecrated and crowned by the name of Gregory VII." How he used the power thus gotten, especially how he used it at Canossa, all the world knows. Yet strange to say he died an exile, taking refuge at Salerno with the Norman, Robert of Guiscard.

In the church of St. John Lateran it was that four (or five, according to the reckoning of some) Œcumenical Councils were held. In 1123the first Council of the West assembled here; it is famous, or infamous, for the decree—a fulfilment of prophecy—"forbidding to marry." The second met in 1130, when Innocent II. gathered 1,000 Bishops to annul the acts of his rival, to anathematise the teaching of Peter de Bruis, who had been burnt to death in 1126 for teaching that a Christian had fellowship with God, without intervention of a priest. The living as well as the dead was assailed in the person of Arnold of Brescia, the noblest name that Rome has given to liberty. This patriot monk had presumed to quote the declaration of Christ, "My kingdom is not of this world," and to maintain that Abbots, Bishops, and the Pope himself must renounce either their state or their salvation. It was at this point that the council interposed, and Arnold was condemned

to die. He fled to the land where many have found shelter since, the land of the Switzer. Bidden back to Rome in the service of freedom, Gibbon says he ruled the city ten years; our countryman, the one English Pope, who gave Ireland to England, gave Arnold to the flames. The third Lateran Council was held to celebrate the successful issue of the feud between the Papal See and Frederick Such are the revenges of time, for it Barbarossa. was through this man that Arnold was crushed by Pope Adrian. Visitors to Venice will remember the spot at the entrance of St. Mark's, where the Pope set his foot on the neck of Barbarossa, whilst a flatterer whispered, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder." That which is known as the great Lateran Council (the fourth) was convoked by that greatest of Popes, Innocent III., in the year 1215. This was the man, and this the moment selected to propound the dogma of Transubstantiation, to declare the goods of heretics consficated. Turn to Revelation xiii. 17, and you will see "that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name," that they could not hold property or make a will, and that all rulers were bound to punish them.

The Latin Patriarch, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and 400 Bishops signed away their liberties when they passed the fifth decree, which declares the Church of Rome to be the mother of all churches;

and the ambassadors of England, France, Hungary, Arragon, Sicily, and Cyprus parted with the liberties of these countries when they subscribed to articles amongst which Auricular Confession and Easter Communion were enjoined upon all at the pain of exclusion from the Church and from Christian burial. One more Council met in this Church under Leo X., and at this it was that the Gallican liberties were sacrificed.

It must have been about the time Leo X. held this Council that a young German entered Rome by the Porta del Popolo, where he said mass, and passed on to the Lateran, where he saw what we too saw—though it is the least credible nineteenth century sight in existence—people on their knees crawling up the Santa Scala. That any sane man should believe that this was the staircase down which Christ went to Pilate's judgment hall, or, that if it were, a soul could be one whit better off in this world or the world to come for thus ascending its steps, was too much for Luther, and surely, would be too much for my readers.

It led Luther to sound a retreat and reveillé, and soon Germany and England, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, responded to the summons. It was high time. The state of things had become so unendurable in the court of Rome, that a few years later a commission of Cardinals and Prelates declared that, "In this very city strumpets walk about like honest matrons, or ride mules, accom-

panied in mid-day by nobles, by friends of cardinals, and by clergymen. In no city have we witnessed such corruption as in this, the example of all." And this, mark you, was not in the dark ages of which Sir James Stephen wrote: - "Of the twentyfour Popes who, in the tenth century, ascended the Apostolic Throne, two were murdered, five driven into exile, four were deposed, and three resigned. Some were raised to their awful pre-eminence by arms and some by money; two received it from the hands of princely courtezans; one was self-appointed: a well-filled purse purchased one Papal abdication: the promise of a fair bride another. All sacred things had become venal. Crime and debauchery held revel in the Vatican." "Dissolute boys," says the author of Janus, "occupied and disgraced the Apostolic Throne;" and a Bishop of the time, Arnulf of Orleans, writes, "It is notorious that there is not one in Rome who knows enough of letters to qualify him for a door-keeper;" and, after referring to horrible crimes committed in the Curia, he proceeds, "to such monsters, full of infamy, void of all knowledge, human and divine, are all the priests of God to submit?" Yes, and more; they are to acknowledge that the pure stream of orders undefiled and of infallibility unquestioned flowed through that sewer of stifling corruption.

For this is what it has come to, this is the declaration of the latest council of Rome and of Roman Christendom—the council of THE VATICAN.

It is time, and more than time, that we turned to its halls. But we are detained on the way, as soon as we cross the Tiber, by an enormous circular building, sometimes called the Mole of Adrian, because that Emperor built it for his tomb—the largest surely in the world—but better known now as the Castle of St. Angelo, because a holy angel was said to have appeared on the spot and terminated a pestilence. It was that they might have the protection of this fortress that the Popes, after their "seventy years' captivity" in Avignon, abandoned the palace of the Lateran and built, enlarging again and again, the Palace of the Vatican. As we pass St. Angelo we shudder to think what tales those walls could tell. There John XII. mutilated John the Cardinal; there Boniface strangled John XII. and starved John XIV. But it is too painful to linger; let us pass on. Entering the Vatican, we reach first the Apartimento Borgia, so called from that monster amongst monsters. Alexander VI. We pass on to the Sixtine Chapel called after Sixtus IV., and painted by Michael Angelo, whose fading frescoes all the world tries to see; then along Raphael's Loggia to the Villa Belvidere. Scala and Sala Santa, Pauline chapel and court of Bramante, are all grouped in this immense pile, 1151 feet long, and 767 broad, whose staircases number 200 and its rooms 4422. This is the place where Leo XIII. is a prisoner! Its galleries of art are the richest in the world, as well they may be. seeing that the world was ransacked to supply them, and that even churches had to relinquish claim to many of their treasures when these were restored to Rome after the wars of the first Napoleon.

But if the glories of the Vatican palace are beyond describing, those of the Vatican church baffle all description. That church, the first and the last every one sees in Rome, is the Basilica of St. Peter's. This mass of magnificence, 446 feet long, 152 feet high within and 448 without, which covers more ground than any other church in Christendom, engaged the genius of both Raphael and Michael Angelo; the latter of whom died in his eighty-ninth year, just at the completion of the dome, of that dome under which ninety-three lamps burn night and day before the shrine of him whose relics are supposed to lie beneath, and whose office is supposed to have been that of the chief of the Apostles. All suppositions, mark you. It would be strange if after all it should turn out that Peter never sat in that chair at all, and never was in Rome in his life. I know, of course, that they show in St. Pietro in vinculo (where stands Michael Angelo's Moses), the very chain with which Peter was bound; that Bramante built a temple over the hole of the cross to which he was nailed; that fountains can be seen in the Mamertine prison, said to have sprung up there for him to baptize his gaoler: that the form of his head is impressed, they say, on its walls, and the print of His Master's foot

on the stone of the place where He appeared to nerve Peter for the crucifixion which he was half avoiding. But somehow all these things do not impress me favourably. They rather incline me to accept the arguments of those who aver that Peter was never at Rome. But if he was—if he and Paul lived there together, and together died, it was "not as lords over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock."

Such a description is not one which at all suits Peter's successors, so called. To pass over all that intervenes, the last of the Popes closed a pontificate, marked by many assumptions, by the monstrous assertion that in his ex-cathedrâ declarations he is personally infallible. For this, were letters sent summoning Bishops from their sees from all Europe and America. For this did they gather in those gilded halls, muzzled at the outset by the precaution that nothing could be brought forward till it had received the approval of a congregation of Papal nominees; mocked in the end, for Pio IX, proclaimed in that clear, ringing voice of his, not their decision at all,—I mean, that he promulgated the dogma of infallibility and the other dogmas as his decision in which they concurred, not their decision in which he united. So that it has come to this, that the church of Jesus Christ is narrowed to the church of Rome, and the church of Rome to the ipse dixit of one man, be he a Borgia or whatever he may. He was His Holiness long ago: He

is His Infallibility now. He as God sitteth in the Temple of God (for as Canon Hoare remarks, Peter's chair is over the high altar), giving himself out that he is God. The effrontery of the scarlet woman can go no farther. "Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."

We have no pleasure in dwelling upon such themes. Far rather would I speak of saintly menthe Roman church has many such-like St. Francis d'Assisi. Even among the popes there have been some who redeemed the name from execration, a Leo IX. for instance, described as "holy and gentle, who set himself to the work of reform, and called a council to put an end to simony and concubinage." His death was worthy of his life. Looking into his coffin already prepared, he exclaimed, "Behold, my brethren, the mutability of human things: the cell which was my dwelling when a monk expanded into yonder spacious palace, it shrinks again into this narrow coffin." I greatly fear such cases were exceptional, but, if not, it is not a question of character but of claim, and that is so astounding as to be intolerable.

As we leave the Papal city—many of its shrines unvisited, I confess—a voice seems sounding in our ears, "Beware of the leaven." Yes, even of a little leaven, for that is enough to leaven the whole lump. "No harm in flowers, or much music, in incense or intonation, in sacramental grace, or sacerdotal

claims." Nay, but, there may be harm. Leaven spreads; poison kills; and the mystery of iniquity is full-blown at last. I dare say that Papal presumption grew like any other tree, and that its beginnings did not seem presumptuous at all. Christian was asked to preside over his fellow Christians, and was called what Peter calls himself. a presbyter; by-and-bye he was asked to preside among his fellow presbyters, and when his presidency became permanent, it became the fashion to call him only-what all presbyters were called in Peter's day and in Paul's-a Bishop. When the circle widened there must be added archbishops. metropolitans, patriarchs, popes. A hundred things helped it. Constantine, Pontifex Maximus of Paganism, transferred his title, and the right to give the pallium, to Rome's Christian head. "The transfer of the Empire to Constantinople removed the only personage who could outvie Rome's Bishop;" and the inroad of the barbarians, the misery of the nation, was the making of the Papacy. Like fame, the phantom mischief grows by simply going on. "Beware of the leaven."

"Beware of covetousness." The Pope claimed a penny from the king of France for every house in his kingdom, another from the king of England for every house in Ireland. And the greed was not merely official; it soon also became personal. Who built and beautified the palaces and villas which make one of the greatest attractions at Rome? The Palazzo

Corsini was given its form by Clement XII. So was the Palazzo Della Consulta. The Palazzo Colonna was built by one Pope. The immense Palazzo of the Borghese was begun by a Cardinal and completed by a Pope; so was the Barberini. And who has not heard of the lavish magnificence bestowed on both his palace and villa by Cardinal Albani?

The love of money is the root of all evil: and we do not wonder so much at the shipwrecks of faith Rome witnessed when we witness this widespread corruption. You will find descriptions of magnificence in the Babylon of the Apocalypse; they are not overdrawn, if intended for the magnificence of Papal palaces.

Covetousness goes hand in hand with cruelty. "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and . . . wondered." He need not have wondered, as Mr. Guinness well says, had she represented a Pagan power. It was her Christian character that made the marvel. Not merely Protestantism, all humanity itself has to shudder as it thinks of Rome's cruelty, now proclaiming a crusade, which cut off 200,000 Waldenses; now going to the Church of St. Louis, to return thanks (as a medal I possess shows) for the murder of 30,000 Huguenots; and if Rome has changed, she has never confessed and owned her guilt.

Time would fail me were I to try to tell of the *impositions* palmed upon the credulity of the pious in the capital of Christendom. Frequent descrip-

tions have been given of the healing bambino in the church of Ara Cœli. I had this mass of fraud and finery in my arms. It used to be sent in a coach-and-four to work miracles, till the preciousness of the jewels that cover it made it safer to keep it at home.

The last day I was in Rome, I went into the Church of S. Prassida, where (I copied part of the list) are relics of saints and apostles:—the teeth of Paul and Peter, a camista of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the girdle of the Lord Jesus Christ, the arm of S. Philip, Moses' rod, the earth on which our Lord prayed before His passion, relics of forty martyrs, the veil of the holy Agatha, the swaddling clothes of Christ, the reed, the sponge, the thorn of the crown of Jesus Christ, the black marble column to which Christ was bound. Well may Adam Smith sav. "The Church of Rome is the most formidable combination that was ever formed against the authority and security of civil government, as well as against the liberty, reason, and happiness of mankind."

The notes of the true Church are four: she is one, holy, catholic, apostolic. The notes of the Papacy are four also: arrogant, covetous, cruel, and cunning. "Come out of her, my people." Yet, if you are living in your lusts, living in sin, if with greater light there be no real faith and no true walking with God, then even from that Communion, unlike the Church of the New Testament as it is, shall some

go into the kingdom of Heaven before you. Seek not merely to defend the Gospel, but to live it, and may it mightily live in you.



IX.

Assisi and St. Francis.

'Mid darkest haunts of sin,
A veteran warrior, steadfast, undeterred,
With holy pitying love his bosom stirred,
Stands forth, and enters in.

God's light upon his brow, Divine compassion in his earnest eyes, Making the sin-bound sufferers arise, And hope they know not how.

Grief in his sadden'd tones—
Earth's shadows veiling immortality;
His woe—to see his brethren sin and die;
His anguish—brethren's groans.

THE AUTHOR OF "VASCO."



CHAP. IX.

ASSISI AND ST. FRANCIS.

"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."—Gal. vi. 17.

MANY of my readers will at once understand why I have chosen these words of St. Paul to head this chapter. They will remember that in all pictures of St. Francis d'Assisi he is represented with five wounds, and that they are called the stigmata or "marks of the Lord Jesus." The subject of our sketch is not to be confounded with the St. Francis who wrote the "spiritual letters" and preached before Henri IV., he was a Savoyard: nor with St. Francis Xavier, the wonderful missionary to the East, he was a Spaniard; but the one of whom we speak—as devoted as either of the others—more devoted he could not be—lived much earlier. was of the thirteenth century, an Italian of the little Umbrian town of Assisi. A vivid impression is left on the traveller's mind by the Franciscan Convent of that town; its vast front "resting upon a long line of arches clinging to the hill sides." We

approached it from Perugia, also in the hill country of Umbria, dear to lovers of art as the town of Pietro Perugino. Beneath it stands an Etruscan tomb, weird and beautiful, and in wonderful preservation after an antiquity to which that of the painter or the monk is modern. But, drive on. charioteer, and take us to the spot we long to see. the Portiuncula of Assisi-the tiny house enclosed as a little gem in a large casket, in the great church of St. Mary of the Angels. In that little church. six and a half centuries ago, a young man gathered about him a little band which grew and grew, till his disciples and followers filled the land of Italy, and overflowed to many another—to ours among the rest. To that little church, after journeys vast and labours herculean—journeys to Spain and Syria, labours for God and man, this same saintly man returned at the age of less than forty-five to die. With noble counsels on his lips for others to heed. and undying hopes for his own brave soul, so he died; and then a great wailing arose, not only among the band at the Portiuncula, but among the people in the town above, and all Assisi rose up as one man to bury him; and somewhere under the crypt of that triple church which Giotto and Cimabue have covered with frescoes that, alas! will fade, they laid him.

Such was the end of St. Francis d'Assisi. Some say that his funeral was hurried to hide his hands and side from the people, to keep them from trying to see what were not to be seen. the stigmata, the five wounds, "the marks of the Lord Iesus." Had they been really in his body. his body would have been left longer, it is thought. to be examined by the eyes of all. Besides, Francis never spoke of having received the stigmata, or at most spoke of it but once—and that, though he lived at least two years after it is alleged that he received them. What is alleged, you will ask. That away, at a little woodland oratory on Monte Alverno, the gospel, thrice consulted as to his future, opened at the story of the Passion. That on September 14th—the day of the Holy Cross—contemplating the agony and cross of Jesus, whom he called then as often his dearest Lord, there appeared stretching over him a great figure as of a seraph, its arms apart, its feet together, as on a cross; and that as he thought on the vision, there began to appear in his own hands and feet signs of nails just as he had seen in the Holy Crucified One who stood over him. Francis is not the last, though he may have been the first saint, said to have received the stigmata, nor do his disciples profess to have seen the marks, but only tell us they were there.

I wonder whether a little circumstance that occurred in my ministry here, at its commencement, may help you as it has often helped me to understand how, at once honestly and naturally, such a thought should have risen about the saint, emaciated and suffering as we know he was. I was sent for to see

an aged member of my church; she suffered, and had suffered for years, agonies of pain from wounds in her feet. Once in a sleeping or waking vision, the Saviour, this same Jesus, whom she loved, I daresay, almost as truly as Francis, seemed to appear to her, and pointed to His feet as though they were hers, or to her wounds as though they were His. In suffering as in service the Saviour and His saint were one, and what was her privilege then and that of Francis long before, may be yours now and mine.

But without determining absolutely about these physical stigmata, St. Francis was one, who, in a far higher sense, surely did bear in his "body the marks of the Lord Jesus," and for this reason, with all his faults and follies (and in his early religious history he certainly had both), I think he is a character well worthy our contemplation, and in part our imitation too. What we have to say about Assisi all gathers around him-what we have to say about him may be thought of in connection with these five "marks of the Lord Iesus." He was wounded in the HEART, smitten with the love of God, and this was a "mark of the Lord Jesus." He was wounded in the HANDS with the love of poverty and the love of prayer, and these were "marks of the Lord Jesus." He was wounded in the FEET with the love of saints and the love of sinners, and these were " marks of the Lord Jesus."

First, there was that great wound in the heart,

the smart of which he could not conceal. THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. The first sight we get of Francis, he was the foremost in every feat of arms, and the gavest in every festival. The brightest eves in Assisi, and the most reverent brows there, were bent alike in complacency upon him. for he was as assiduous in business as in pastime: and his pleasures (would that as much could be said of all young men) were not tarnished with He was, in fact, like many a heart in the heyday of youth. But what made him so different from them afterwards—nay, so different from himself? For almost the next sight we catch of him is in the habit and attitude of a beggar, craving a stone or beam of timber to carry down to a little ruined church, the church of St. Damian, to repair That is his occupation—that his pastime and pleasure now. Earlier still at Spoleto, he had heard a voice—" Francis, who can do one most good, the Master or the servant?" "The Master." he answered. "Why then, (and oh! of how many still might this question be asked!) do you leave the Master for the servant—the Prince for the follower?" This was what made a different man of Francis. and what alone can make a man of you, "the love of God was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost." It did not remain there a placid lake; if it had, even it would have been turned by its surroundings into a stagnant pool—but it gushed forth in a cleansing, dashing torrent, "for the love of Christ constrained" him; and it must constrain us my friends, if it is to be worth anything, or if we are to be worth anything, rather. "The love of Christ constrained" him, and for the sake of it, we forgive a great deal of folly and fanaticism which showed themselves in what he did at first and even at last. They would be intolerable, but for this principle ennobling in spite of all.

This love of Christ comes out again and again in all his life. You will mistake the man altogether. and my meaning in referring to him, if you think of him as a priest or a monk in the common sense. I have no liking for either. "But," says his biographer, "for him there was no question of seclusion. of cloistered quiet and still learning. He was not of the world, vet would he not be taken out of the world. It was the life of his Lord which was his inspiration and example." "A sinner," he said, "can fast and pray and weep and mortify his flesh: this only he cannot do, be faithful to his Lord;" and that not done, nothing he felt was done. must be first, Christ must be all. As to Sta Chiara. miserable mistake as it was to wile her from her home into a Convent, there was nothing of self about it; his pure heart sought only to "lead her from a world of darkness and to pour into her ears the sweetness of Christ." Priest indeed! ritual of the early Franciscans consisted in repeating the Lord's Prayer and this one other, "We adore Thee, O Christ, in all Thy churches which are in

all the world, and we bless Thee: by Thy holy Cross. Thou hast redeemed the world."

Bonaventura describes him thus:—"Who can form a conception of the fervour and love of Francis, the friend of Christ? You would have said that he was burnt up by divine love like charcoal in the flames. As often as his thoughts were directed to that subject, he was excited as if the chords of his soul had been touched by the plectrum of an inward voice, but as all lower affections elevated him to this love of the Supreme. he vielded himself to the admiration of every creature which God formed." Have you this wounded heart? Have you this "mark of the Lord Jesus?" I do not know, you say, I do not know whether I love Him or not. Well, a tree is known by its fruits, and so is love—the fruits of love in Francis were POVERTY and PRAYER. These were the wounds in his hands—"marks of the Lord Iesus." surely—conspicuous in the life of Francis.

POVERTY. He loved her so much that he called her his *bride*. He loved her so much that for the sake of her and of her dear Lord, he hated father and mother, houses and lands, yea, and his own life, that he might be Christ's disciple. For you must know that Francis, finding that principle in the Gospel (a whole Bible, I suspect, he never had) but hearing that read in the Gospel for the day once, he went to the priest and asked what it meant. Would that some wise guide had now pointed him

to true poverty rather than to the literal; but possibly the literal was best-best for him, and best for the world through him. At all events, most literally he fulfilled it: putting off his shoes there and then, throwing aside his staff and his scrip, and for the leathern girdle taking the first thing that came, a rope to bind his tunic round him; and this was he of whom his parents had once said, "he is like the son of a prince, not like our son!" his share in the great merchant's wealth, all his gay clothing must go, and he must, as Giotto's fresco shows, put the nuptial ring on a hand hard with toil, while her feet are cut with stones and briars; but mark you the iron brow of Poverty is crowned by the painter with light and roses. I honor him not for the blundering blindness that misinterpreted Scripture and misconstrued his duty, but for the conscientiousness that obeyed what seemed to him to be right, and the fidelity that carried him through with it. And, my friends, it must be so still with you and me. As one deeply exercised about divine things who would not allow me to minimize his duty said. "Well, vou know, Christ sacrificed Himself to please God, and must not we?" We must indeed, for that is just the essence of the whole matter: that is just what Francis did in all the steps —the blind steps—he took. It is just the want of this that gives us a starveling church and a lost world.

His rule was laid before Innocent III. at the Lateran, as the Pope was traversing its terrace one

eventful evening. The interruption was as unwelcome as abrupt. Innocent's lip curled, and he sternly commanded the beggars to withdraw; but at night he dreamt how a palm sprouted between his feet and spread, and the vision of the night dictated a different policy in the morning.

Francis had many temptations against that poverty which was his most signal virtue. His own love of pleasure was one, his father's love of prosperity was another, but greater than either was the temptation that came through his own friends. Cardinal Ugolino wanted to make him Cardinal, and so would others in the church, but he would have none of these things. In the absence of their Moses, his followers hankered after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and he came home from his most perilous mission to find them in fine houses. and with almost dainty fare. He soon stripped all bare again. This fidelity to first convictions was a grand thing, even if in part mistaken. not have taught his generation how kingly it is to be free from all earthly things, how inferior they are to heavenly treasure, and above all, how all-sufficient Christ is to the soul's happiness, if he had gone back from his utter simplicity. Above all, he would have seemed a renegade, and probably have been Let us be slow in coming to conclusions that involve great sacrifices or great changes in our lives: but let conviction once formed rule us and live on in us, unshaken by the temptations of time and the wavering of friends.

The third mark of the Lord Jesus that I named in this holy man of God was PRAYER. incidents may suffice to bring before us his habit in this respect. Bernardo di Quintavelle, one of the most noble, rich, and learned of the city, had watched the early course of the young recluse, bid him to his house, to his room, that thus in his own chamber he might better detect, if there were such, any flaw in his religion. Francis, averse to all parade even of holiness, threw himself upon the bed, and seemed to sleep, but when he thought his host was slumbering, he rose and flung himself on his knees and cried, "My God, my God;" so he prayed, and with many tears, until dawn. morning light, Bernardo, finding him thus true as steel, told him he had made up his mind to leave "A hard thing," said Francis, "and we the world. must ask counsel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and pray to Him to show us." And so they went, as some Covenanters might in later times, to a minister. bidding him give them a word from the Gospel. and he gave to Bernardo, "Go, sell all thou hast" (which he did); and to Francis, "Take nothing for your journey;" and to both, "He who will come after Me, let him deny himself."

Often would he (like a later and sterner evangelist, Charles Finney) retire to the woods for prayer; there, the birds his "brothers," and the lambs his "sisters," as he loved to call them, seemed to his simple soul to be praising God, and he only too

gladly joined their song. The wild falcon wheeled and fluttered round him, the leveret tried rather to attract than escape his notice, half frozen bees crawled to him in winter to be fed. A lamb followed him to the city of Rome, and was playfully cherished there under the name of "Minor Brother." From woods he turned to churches, and once, in 1224, with one follower, Leoni, he bent before the symbols of love divine, and in his rapt devotion. seemed to Leoni to rise toward that heaven to which his soul was so soon to go. You may make what you will of the story. I make this at least. that from first to last (for the former incident marked the beginning, and this was near the end of his course), like the Master, he delighted in prayer: like the Master, he praved with strong crying and tears: like the Master, was heard in that he feared: and agonies and raptures succeeded one another in his devotion. Oh! that we might as well bear the ordeal of the sleeping chamber, and (were this, as happily it is not, a credulous age) might leave on those who see us pray the impression of like nearness to heaven and to God.

I said, lastly, that the feet of Francis had two great wounds pierced by the nails of the Cross of Christ, viz.:—LOVE FOR SAINTS AND LOVE FOR SINNERS.

The impression we are apt to have of hermits and recluses, even when they are heart-whole and honest, is that they are selfish, spiritually selfish, giving themselves up to contemplation and prayer, for the advantage of their own souls. Nothing could be well less like this than the retirement from the world which Francis sought and found. The salvation of one miserable soul, his own, or even its perfecting in holiness, seems to have occupied a very small share of his thoughts. He was willing to forego earthly comfort, and, if need were, human society, but he was the last man who would have been willing to forego the good of his kind. monks went out of the world, the friars went into it," as one has well said, and Francis was the founder of those black friars of whom the preacher's gown is, I suppose, a truly Protestant relic. Francis did not preach at first indeed, but he did that which is more difficult, he spoke to his fellow creatures singly. He went with Egidio to Assisi, and by the way was asked alms for the love of God, and having nothing to give, he looked at Egidio with the face of an angel, and for the love of God begged his cloak of his carissimo fratello. The cloak given to the beggar, they went on their way, singing along the sunny roads and saying to the passers by tenderly, "Love and serve God, and Besides this exoteric, there was the interior repent you truly of your sins."

teaching to some who became his companions. One may imagine what converse his very life would give such. The twelve friends first gathered around

Francis became the nucleus of his first order. The second was the female order, of which the first member, and for forty-two years the Abbess, was Santa Chiara, or Clara, from whom the sister-hood of the "poor Clares" derives its name.

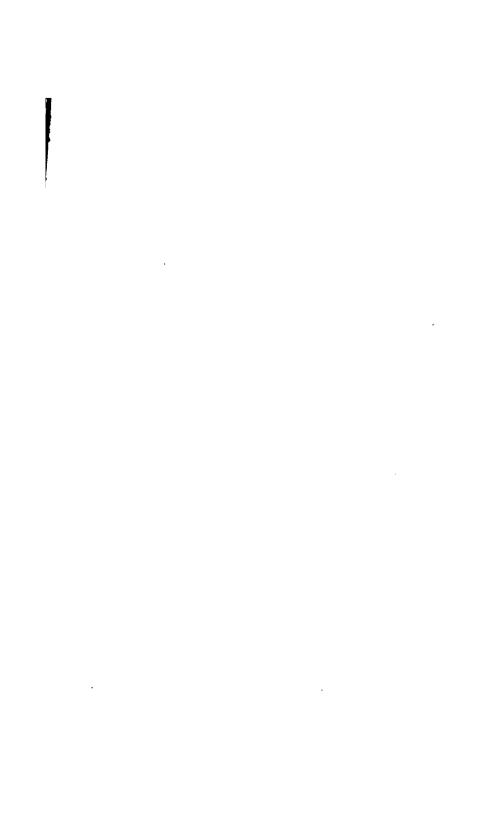
But this could not content him, and he sent to Chiara and to a hermit to know if it were the will of God that he should preach. They both answered that God willed it and would give words; and Francis, springing from the earth, said joyfully, "Let us go forth in the name of the Lord." At his burning eloquence, sinners abandoned their vices. and cried as in the days of Peter, "What must we do?" It was no easy question to answer when it meant (as in this case) "How can we join vour order?" "A whole castle full of penitent people, lord and lady, officers and retainers, resolved to follow the preacher and to renounce the world." What must we do? Well, what? it occurred to this man's noble and inventive mind that it would never do to bind them to his rulepoverty, celibacy, and so on-nor on the other hand to leave them to vague generalities—that would be to leave them to drift back to the world: so like a true shepherd he said to them, "Remain in your homes, and I will find you a way of serving God;" and in the spirit of the Good Shepherd he founded the order of penitence in which they promised to keep God's commandments, to avoid profane oaths. make restitution to those they had wronged, draw no sword save in their church or their country's cause—and yet dwell at home, attend to their employ, and give none occasion to the adversary to blaspheme. This was the *third* order. St. Louis of France, his mother, and wife were all members of it. So was St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and many another princess.

But even such preaching and such results could not content a heart that beat for all humanity. Francis inaugurated a great Missionary Institution, east, west, north, south, his preachers went—just as did John Wesley's preachers hundreds of years afterwards; and those of Francis were, I suspect, just as much despised as they. But the Frate himself, what of him? Well, you will find him now on the Alps, now in Provence, in France, in Spain—where will you not find him? And always with the word of Christ on his lips, and the love of Christ in his life. But of all his missions, of all the missions of any man, the most strange and brave was his mission to the Soldan.

The great leader of the Saracens had his camp away by the White Nile. If only his heart could be changed, thought Francis, the world would be changed. He felt that the attempt should be made, nor would he shirk the responsibility, and so he went to the camp of the Crusaders first, and then advanced beyond their lines to that of the Saracens. A gold besant was the price of every Christian's head, but what cared he who "bare in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus?" Assailed, surrounded, but spared, he cried to the assailants, "I am a Christian, take



me to your lord." They cruelly seized and bound him, and with many blows brought him before the Mohammedan sovereign, who, admiring the courage and fervour of spirit which he saw in the man of God, invited him to remain with him. "If vou and your people will be converted to Christ, for His love I will willingly remain with you; and if you are doubters, kindle a fire, and see whether it will spare your priest or me." The imaum slunk away. "I do not believe that any of them will expose himself," said the Soldan. "If you will promise for yourself and people that you will embrace the worship of Christ if I come forth unharmed. I am ready to enter the fire alone." Enthusiasm so intense inspired at least admiration, and when weeks after the missionary left the monarch's presence, "Pray for me," said the latter, "that God may reveal to me that law and faith which are according to His own heart." It is a most affecting story. "Incomplete?" It will be completed in heaven. Only there shall we see the signs that followed a Christian so true, but this see we here. though he was rash to a fault, that Francis "bare in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Oh! that we had his love of God, his love of poverty, his love of prayer, his love of man saved or lost! Oh! for more such missionaries, more such men; for like devotion to the Redeemer, for like longing for souls, for like consecration of character in life and in death.



x. **Florence.**

" Beautiful

The city lies along the ample vale, Cathedral, tower and palace, piazza and street, The river trailing like a silver cord Through all, and curling loosely, both before And after, over the whole stretch of land Sown whitely up and down its opposite slopes With farms and villas."

E. B. Browning



CHAP. X.

FLORENCE.

"Vanity of vanities."-Eccles. xii. 8.

NEVER, while life lasts, can fade from my memory, surely, the recollection of the vision of beauty that broke upon my sight as I first issued forth into the streets of Florence. It was the month of Maythe month of flowers; and of flowers, so the very name said, Florence was the city. But sweet and lovely as are the roses that grow within its smiling vale, none is half so lovely as that pile of precious stones, tinted like a rose with the costly marbles with which from base to pediment it is overlaid, and like a rose having grown leaf by leaf and age by age (not being finished even yet), I mean St. Mary of the Flowers, the Cathedral Church of the city. The sun was setting when I saw her first: and her Duomo, the largest though not the loftiest in the world, was glowing in his last crimson kiss. While beside her, like the lily or the angel of the annunciation, straight and fair, her bell tower stood

as marrian near her, its base crowded as with gems set in time grici with has reliefs representing asremany, architecture, pottery, agriculture, trade, navigation, gennery scainture painting-all crowned and amsummated by sacrifice—the divine sacrifics—the Lamb of God. The campanile itself and the whole church, excepting only the too parrow windows and the capola are encrusted with inlaid marties, as rich and variegated as work of Indian ivory. I knew as if by instinct that I was looking at the Cathreiral of Florence, and at Giotto's tower. But I did not know what time it took to build, or how many and illustrious were its builders. I did not know how proudly the city had called them to her side in summons such as this: - "The Florentine Republic, soaring ever above the conception of the most competent judges, desires that an edifice should be constructed, so magnificent in its height and beauty, that it shall surpass everything of the kind produced in the time of their greatest power by the Greeks and Romans."

It was a proud boast, and hardly warranted—certainly not warranted by the dark interior of the building—but the exterior is rich and lovely beyond compare, excepting always the glorious Gothic Churches. It was a grand day—the year is not certain, but probably it was 1284—when before all the assembled magnates of Tuscany, its foundation was laid. The year 1300 (it is an easy date to remember) saw the death of the great architect

Arnolfo, and of the great painter Cimabue—the former is chiefly known to us as the builder of this Cathedral and of Santa Croce, the church of the black friars; the latter as the last of the old school of painting and the unconscious author of the new, for he was Giotto's master.

It is an incident which every young heart should store up for its inspiration: the story of Cimabue in the height of his powers and his fame, going forth into the fields, and finding a shepherd boy amidst his flock scratching with a stone the figure of a sheep upon a slate. The lordly painter detected genius in the rude sketch, and Giotto was hurried away to his studio. Not only Tuscany, but all Italy, employed the merry shepherd boy's pencil; the great Dante delighted in his friendship; and at the age of sixty he turned to another art, and as architect and sculptor immortalized himself in the erection of this, the most beautiful campanile upon earth, which all the world calls Giotto's tower.

Just opposite to it stands, where it has stood since the 8th century, a little octagon building, one of the most ancient Christian edifices extant, the baptistry of St. John. The building was simple enough, simple and severe, till in the 15th century, the city bethought itself of completing the Cathedral, and making its companion edifices more worthy of their site, and so they opened a competition for gates for the baptistry. A mere lad of seventeen, Donatello, and two young men of three and

twenty, Brunelleschi and Ghiberti, competed for the work: and (all workmen and artists, and all others too, would do well to read, mark, and learn), they themselves declared that Ghiberti's plans deserved to be accepted. Accepted they were, and for forty years (oh! what a lesson of patience) he wrought at the gates, and when they were erected, a greater artist than he, Michael Angelo Buonarotte declared them fit to be the gates of heaven. Filippo Brunelleschi, one of the unsuccessful candidates for the gates, went off thereupon to Rome, and worked away at plans for a still greater work, the completion of the Cathedral by the erection of its dome. Years went by in preparation at a distance, and vears more of thwarting interruption near; but at last the plans were finished, the word was given, and the great vaulted roof sprang to its place above the marble walls, and as the sun pursues its course. it can hardly look upon a grander group of buildings than that whose site and story I have tried to describe to you. I have had a purpose in this detailed description, and I cannot delay you longer from stating what that purpose is—albeit that there is much to attract us in all that is around. in that Franciscan Church of Santa Croce, for instance, the Westminster Abbey of Florenceand that Dominican Church of S. Maria Novello. with the Spanish Chapel and cloisters of world wide fame. These, and many another church and many a palazzo might detain us, but all would only

say more strongly what the great Duomo says-ART CANNOT SAVE. That is the great lesson learnt at Florence, I think, and a lesson much needing to be learnt in this our day; would that one could burn it into the consciences of all. Art cannot save. is no reproach to Art that it cannot; Art was never meant to save. It is not its business. place and function of its own, let it be honoured for it and occupied in it, but let us not drag it to a throne for which it never was intended; that were to try to feed our souls with sweetmeats instead of upon living bread. That Duomo is an excellent emblem of what Art is: bright, beautiful, enchanting on the outside, but inside heavy and stern and sombre. It is even so when associated with religion. were shown in that Florence the house where Galileo lived, and the observatory where he watched the stars. But we had been shown too. in Rome, the place where he was tried and condemned to recant—to recant no spiritual or moral, but a scientific heresy, mark you. The church that did that thing stultified herself: and she was the church in which of all others Art and Religion have been most allied. I was shown, too, a house on the Lung Arno where the head of a great sisterhood breathed her last. This devout lady, when near her end, got them to telegraph to the Pope for a sort of safe conduct to heaven. telegram when received was pinned to her left arm, that her eyes might rest on its comforting sentence. It was not comfort enough however, so they telegraphed again, and a second and stronger message came, and was pinned to the right arm. Perhaps I ought to own that superstition rather than Art was to blame in these cases. But both together were powerless to save Galileo's persecutors from bigotry and folly, and the Lady Superior from the fear of death.

"Well, if it cannot do much for death, Art can at least enable men to live a bright, a beautiful, a happy life." Can it? Let us see. We could have no better place than Florence for pursuing our enquiry, for all arts were practised there, and there man became proficient in all.

Let us begin with the noblest, begin with POETRY. There is hardly a grander poem than Dante's Divina Comedia, and hardly a grander face than its Yes, you reply, and hardly a sadder, whether we say it of the poem or of the face. the friend of Giotto, with a nature bright as the day: the friend too of Guido Cavalcante, the troubadour: the ambassador of his city to Venice, to Paris, to Rouen: the author distinguished alike in prose and poetry, was yet one of the saddest, I had almost said one of the bitterest, of men. At Spezia. Fallario found him gazing at a monastery, and asked him, "What wouldst thou?" And Dante answered, "Peace." His whole life is the same question and answer a little more loudly repeated. Well, but you say, if the man was bitter he had

bitter sorrows: Beatrice, whom he loved when he and she were but eight years old, died ere any happy union crowned his love: Florence, which he loved with a passion only second, cast out her noblest son, and for years he was a wanderer from her beloved walls. True, true, but in his wanderings he had his poem—his poem and his place too, for other States employed him; and had the Divina Comedia been divine indeed, surely we should not have that worn, wan face looking out upon us from its laurel wreath. Piety would have woven a garland poetry never could, which would have given us a gladder expression. Perhaps we should have it, had any painter found the poet, as he might, solacing the evening of his days at Ravenna, where he died in 1321, versifying the Psalms of David.

The name of David recals another of the children of Florence and Art—another great as he. A huge block of marble had been lying among the débris about the Cathedral, longer than any one could remember. Some sculptor a hundred years before had intended to carve a giant from it, but had only got far enough to spoil the block. A young sculptor begged it of the commissioners, and gaining permission, "made a model in wax," says Vasari, "of a young David with a sling, intended for the front of the palazzo of the Seignory to show that as David had defended his city and governed it with justice, so whosoever governed that city should boldly defend and justly govern it." Then

from the model to the marble the great workman passed, "and performed a miracle," cries Vasari, "in thus resuscitating one who was dead." He who wrought this wonder, this great David. wonder of the world now, was Michael Angelo. Of noble lineage, of great early opportunity, having for his patron Lorenzo the Magnificent at home, and Popes Iulius and Leo X. away, with genius so great that it were hard to say whether he were greater as sculptor, or painter, or architect, for he was all three at Rome (as witness the Pieta, the Sistine frescoes, and St. Peter's dome), nevertheless you will find in him too much of the same melancholv. reaching sometimes to savage bitterness, which with more excuse marked and marred the character of Dante. He himself has written in unsurpassed lines (for he had the poet in him too when he liked) his estimate of the insufficiency of Art to meet man's highest wants.

"The course of life has brought my lingering days
In fragile ship over a stormy sea
To the common port where all our counts must be
Ordered and reckoned, works for blame or praise.
Here ends love's tender fantasy that made
(I know the error of the thought) great Art
My idol and my monarch: now my heart
Perceives how low is each man's longing laid.
Oh! thoughts that tempt us, idle, sweet, and vain,
Where are ye when a double death draws near?
One sure, one threatening an eternal loss.
Painting and sculpture now are no more gain,
To still the soul turned to that Godhead dear,
Stretching great arms out to us from His Cross."

Surely no word need be added to prove that Art cannot satisfy.

But one may think—and we honour the thought for our part—a man ought not to care so much about satisfaction, i.e., about being happy; what he ought to care about is sanctification, i.e., about being good. Perhaps Art will do this for him; if it will, we may set it down as sufficient after all. Nay, I fear me this is the very last thing Art will do. I grant you it may cultivate the taste and refine the imagination, but the life may be just as mean and low, as base and sinful, as life without it.

Let us pass for a moment from artists to patrons There are no greater names among them the world over than the great Florentine family of the Medici. Merchants at first, princes soon, they gave two popes to Rome, a Queen (the Jezebel who wrought the Bartholomew) to France, and a line of dukes to their own city. You will read their glories in that Medicean Chapel, which is a mass of marble and gems, and in that sacristy which with Angelo's Night and Day is the shrine of all that is saddest and greatest in Florence. The greatest of them all was Lorenzo the Magnificent. Pericles and Augustus, he "called to him," says Marchesè, "from every part of Italy, men of genius, writers and artists of reputation, in order to distract all strong and noble intelligences from thoughts of their country. Poets of every kind, gentle and simple, with golden cithern and with rustic lute,

came from every quarter to animate the suppers of the Magnifico." With one he discoursed of Aristotle, with another of Platonic love, now recited a Latin elegy, and now read verses of his own. times a select band of painters and sculptors collected in his garden, or under the loggia of his palace, designing, modelling, painting, copying a Greek statue or a Roman torso. In the darkening of twilight it was his custom to issue forth into the city with increased pomp and a great retinue—more than five hundred—on horse and on foot, with concerts of musical instruments, while four hundred servants with torches lighted the Bacchanalian procession. In the midst of these orgies, a handful of youths grew up who made (alas! for the sanctifying power Art can give!) open profession of infidelity and lewdness, and laying aside all shame gave themselves up to every kind of wickedness."* This is how Art helps men to live, let us see how it will help them to die. Lorenzo fell ill in the spring of 1402. He was too able and clear sighted not to see through his own priestly parasites who flattered and humoured him as much as did his secular friends. Only one man could the dying Magnifico think of, whose ministry would give him comfort firm and strong. This was the Prior of San Marco-a friar who had repulsed him and to whom he had in vain tried to find a rival. "Father." he said, when on a second summons the Prior came.

^{*} Ouoted in "The Makers of Florence."

"there are things which drag me back, and I know not if God will ever pardon me them." "Be not so despairing," said the man supposed to be so stern. "God is merciful, and will be merciful to you if you will do the three things I tell you." "What are these?" "First that you will have a great and living faith that God can and will pardon you." To which Lorenzo answered, "This is a great thing, and I can and do believe you." "Next that everything wrongfully acquired should be given back by you, leaving your children as much as will maintain them as private citizens." These words drove Lorenzo nearly out of himself, but at last he said, "This also will I do." "Lastly it is necessary that freedom and her popular government be restored to Florence." At this speech, Lorenzo turned his back upon him, nor ever said another word, "upon which the Padre left him," says Burlamacchi, "and went away without other confession."

Sic transit gloria mundi. Vanitas vanitatum.





XI.

Savonarola.

Low kneeleth the monk in prayer
In his desolate cell,
Pale as death his lifted brow,
His hands are clenched and pale;
He cannot heed, in this hour of need,
The call of the convent bell.

His hands are clenched and raised
In the conflict dread,
His passionate gaze is on the cross
Above his head;
On the face of One who hangs thereon,
With piercèd hands and thorny crown,
Dying or dead.

How dreadful is this place!
A living man in his woe,
And a marble Christ who never stirs
Where they nailed Him long ago;
Awfully gazing face to face
With the anguished soul below.

I turn me from the cross
To the Crucified—
Will He strengthen me to tread the path
His own feet dyed?
Will He look forth from His lattice to-night,
And show me the smile serene and bright,
That cheers His bride?

In that same hour the Lord
Unveiled His face,
Sending His Spirit down to bless
The solitary place;
Teaching those weary eyes to see,
No marble Christ in agony,
But a living King of Grace.

From "EZEKIEL AND OTHER PO By B. M.



CHAP. XI.

SAVONAROLA.

"Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth! O Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors: take me not away in thy long-suffering: know that for Thy sake I have suffered rebuke. . . I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone, because of Thy hand: for Thou hast filled me with indignation."—Jeremiah xv. 10, 15, 17.

ONE of the most interesting spots in one of the most interesting cities in the world is the Convent of St. Mark's at Florence. It has no great architecture like the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Flowers. No marvel of sculpture like the Academy opposite, which now enshrines the "David;" but it has a great history and calls up to memory several great and beneficent names. As you enter its simple cloisters, you are struck by frescoes that glow upon the walls, making cell after cell bright, and the refectory a blaze of glory. They are the paintings

of Fra Angelico—gentle spirit whose pictures were all sermons, sermons which still speak of ineffable "sweetness and light." He would weep (no wonder) when painting a Christ upon the cross, would pray when painting a saint or martyr, and believing he had heaven's help, would not alter a line of the picture for any one: he lies away from Florence and Fiesole in the one Gothic church of Rome, the Maria sopra Minerva, where a simple tomb records the name of him whom "the city—the flower of Tuscany bore."

The little chamber most embellished and that may hold the visitor longest is that of a Prior of the Convent, the pious Antonino, who all reluctantly was taken from his quiet home to fill the chair of Archbishop of Florence;—a Bishop he with a lovely life such as does one good to think of, and a death as gentle. They tell of him a story which finds its counterpart in that of Wesley and the tax collectors who said he had made no returns for plate. Wesley's answer was that he had "two silver spoons in London and two in Bristol, and meant to buy no more while so many of God's children wanted bread:" so Antonino ordered all that was found in his palace to be given to the poor; "all that could be found was four ducats, so true had he been to his vow of poverty."

But a greater than either, a greater than all in San Marco, was he whose name heads this chapter. Some delay in preparing it has given me time to read another biography of him, but I feel still

little able to touch upon the greatness of the life of GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA; yet still I must try, and that my readers—especially any young readers—may easily follow the thread of my remarks, I will speak of him under the four characters of Prior, of Preacher, of Prophet, and of Patriot Martyr. Each will show us something I think worthy of imitation. Each should lift our thoughts, too, from the servant to the Master, for in speaking of the Prior we shall touch the claims of Christ and the world; of the Preacher, of Christ and the church; of the Prophet, of Christ and man; of the Patriot Martyr, of Christ and life itself. God grant us in each of these to make the right choice—to choose Christ.

First, then, SAVONAROLA THE PRIOR, or Christ and the world. To some of you I daresay it seems that it must have been a very fine thing to have been a Prior, to have jurisdiction over many men—men with burning hearts aglow with love to Jesus, and minds full of intelligence and culture. To others it may seem a very sad thing to have been a Prior, for was not monasticism a crime or a mistake, or both? Now both of these estimates would be wrong. I think if you visit those lonely cells I visited last June, where Savonarola's likeness hangs, cells scarcely large enough to do more than turn round in, and so bare of furniture, that you can well believe that he lived the austere life his biographers describe; his food of the coarsest, and his dress of the plainest,

though always scrupulously clean, for the *frate* believed in cleanliness being next to godliness; "his shoes were long and turned up at the points, for he said they would be full of precious stones in Paradise:"—when we contrast this with the Palazzo or the Villa where other Florentines lived, we may think more worthily of the life of the man who voluntarily shut himself up in that cell.

Mark you, I am not saying one word in favour of his doing so. Monasticism has been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Mr. Lyne* (a friend went to see him the other day, and found him as full of his visions as ever) before he gets Protestant Englishmen to shut themselves up with him at St. Llanthony, should answer this question—How is it that Catholic countries themselves are tired of Convents, and are shutting them up as fast as they can? The practice of monasticism was a great mistake; vet its principle was a very noble one. Its principle was this—that the Christian should forsake all for Christ, should "hate father and mother, yea, and his own life" that he may be Christ's disciple. We saw how that principle wrought in S. Francis, now let us see how it worked in Savonarola.

He was born at Ferrara, 21st September, 1452. His father's profession is unknown, but his mother was the daughter of the illustrious house of Buonacorsi, and his father's father was a physician attract-

^{*} Father Ignatius.

ed to Ferrara by the high patronage of the house of Estè. You can imagine, then, the sort of house in which the boy grew up, and you can imagine too the thrill of intense emotion with which the thought came into young Girolamo's soul, "I must leave it all!" For that thought did come, and when it came it could not be got rid of. For weeks, for months, for years, he fought it off, as you may fight off even truer convictions, but at last he could bear it no longer. At the age of twenty-two he spent a whole night in considering what course he should take, and ended (can we do better?) by dedicating himself entirely to the service of Jesus Christ. Deeply moved by the preaching of an Augustinian at Ferrara, he resolved to take the final step and flee from a world in which, as he wrote to his father, "the robberies, the pride, the idolatries, the cruel blasphemies had come to such a height that there is no longer any one found who does good." But oh! it was heartbreaking work to leave. The night before he set forth on his new life he took his lute in his hand, and played on it a strain so sorrowful that his mother seemed to divine what was passing in his heart, and turning to him with saddened looks, exclaimed, "My son, this is a sign of parting." Next day, while the whole city of Ferrara was celebrating the festival of St. George, he hurried away to Bologna, and sought admission into the Dominican convent of that city where the great founder of the order lies enshrined. "If." he wrote to his father, "I had shown you my purpose, I believe verily my heart would have broken before I could have parted from you, and I should have abandoned the intention I had formed."

It is sad to contemplate such suffering, and that needlessly caused: the system that thus breaks the strings of the sweet harp of God-given affection will have much to answer for. Thank God. we have done with Monachism; may it be for ever! But I entreat you in a better way to make your choice between the world and Christ; and not merely have I to say to you, be as much in earnest in seeking Him and in going after Him when He has been found, but I have to say also,—be as brave in making the choice when it has to be made under circumstances not altogether dissimilar from those I have described. I have known—I know now not a few young people, brought up in worldly homes, who have in a very literal sense to choose between God and their parents, not undutifully pressing any preference, but when necessity is laid upon them, acting up to their convictions. known wives who have had to do the same towards husbands, and husbands towards wives: and (hardest of all for the moment) those who might have been wives or husbands but they "made themselves" solitaries "for the kingdom of heaven's sake." "These are they which are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." God keep them: He does. God comfort them:

He will. And God give us grace when the divisions of heart and the decisions of life come to us, to be as brave.

"My heart is fixed, Eternal God,
Fixed on Thee;
And my immortal choice is made,—
Christ for me."

Next think of SAVONAROLA AS PREACHER, or Christ and the church. If ever there was a man who was a born preacher, it was the Prior of St. Mark's. We think of him especially in this char-At Bologna or Ferrara, and chiefly at acter. Florence, chiefly too in its greatest church, the glorious Duomo. We see the people flocking to it both in the early morning—as so much nearer and later to hear Whitefield, our own Whitefield, by torchlight; or pouring out under the sultry Italian sun to endure hours of hustling and crowding, if only they might get any corner within those coveted There are soldiers there and civilians. knights and ladies, all ranks and classes, and all strangely moved, now to smiles, for the frate had his humour (you see it in his face), and now to tears, so that the ready writers who were reporting his sermons often complain that they had to leave off for weeping.

Yes, Savonarola was a born preacher. But we are not to think (and this is a great comfort to some of us) that he found his way to the hearts of the people at once. The villagers were the first to dis-

cover his worth: the citizens thought his preaching poor stuff then, and thought the silvery sentences of one Fra Mariano far more exhilarating. But at last when popularity did come, it came like an avalanche, so that even the Sultan had his sermons translated into Arabic that he might read them. Savonarola was not a preacher at first, but reader, littore, lecturer as we might say: lecturing away to students at old Bologna, and to students and people together at Florence—a rose tree in the cloisters being his baldachino; but soon he got leave to preach, and the call of God for preaching, and terrible preaching it was. Terrible, I suppose it had to The preaching of repentance, perhaps, must ever precede the preaching of the Gospel: John before the "sweet Galilean vision." Savonarola before the great reformation. The themes on which he insisted—now from the Apocalypse, now from Ezekiel-were that "the church of God must be renovated: that before the renovation Italy must be scourged, and that these things will happen very soon." Again and again he tried to take other topics, again and again he had to return to these. "God is my witness," he says, "that during the whole of Saturday and all last night I lay awake. and every other way and every other doctrine was taken away from me but that. At day-break, wearied and depressed by this long vigil, I heard, whilst praying, a voice saying, 'Fool, dost thou not see that God wills thee to take the same course?'

So that day I delivered a tremendous sermon." "O Italy, O Princes, O Prelates of the church, the wrath of God upon you and yours has no remedy unless you repent. Repent, while the sword is yet sheathed, while it is not yet stained with blood." Well were it for us if with like definiteness we got our message and with like earnestness we delivered it.

It is very blessed, in the midst of torrents of denunciation (all needed) to come upon passages which ripple like a silver brook with Gospel grace. "Let all Paradise come here," he exclaims. "Let the angels come, let the prophets and patriarchs come, let the martyrs come, and all the saints one by one, that I may dispute with them. Come all the elect of God, and confess the truth if you are happy and blessed by your own merits and by your own strength, or by divine goodness. Come here especially you who have been immersed in sins: tell me, Peter, tell me, O Magdalene, why are you in Paradise? You certainly sinned like us. Thou. O Peter, who didst confess the Son of God, who didst converse with Him, heardest Him preach, sawest His miracles-alone with two others sawest Him transfigured—nevertheless, at the words of a mere woman didst deny Him three times, and yet wast restored to grace and made head of the Church, and now possessest heavenly blessedness, whence hast thou obtained so great a good? Thou wilt say, perhaps, because thou didst return in heart.

because thou didst begin to weep bitterly, but that was thanks to His divine goodness which turned and 'looked upon thee.' Thou didst not weep till Thou didst not return until the Lord had touched thy heart. Confess, then, Peter, that it is not by thy merits, but by the goodness of God that thou hast obtained such blessings." Would to God that in more enlightened quarters there were always as full declaration of the doctrines of grace. but that the responsibility of man must have its full place too. As Savonarola himself said, "If any one should ask why the will is free, we reply. because it is the will." "Wilt thou receive the love of Jesus? see that thou consent to the divine voice The Lord calls thee every day which calls thee. do thou also something." And they did: many of these hearers of his, swaved by the prior's voice, turned from sin to God, from the world to holiness, from unbelief to trust in Christ; and in sign thereof many of them tore off their ornaments as they left the church. One of them—one of the earliest of them, was also one of the greatest, Pico di Mirandola. He was a courtier of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and basked in the sunshine of his favour; he was advanced in all the arts and learning which Florence, bursting into the bloom of the renaissance, could produce; but exalted as he was. under the sledge hammer of the preacher's words his soul was smitten, and, spite of shame, he bravely took his place by the Master and His servant.

He it was who first made Savonarola famous, and he it was who, dying in early manhood, begged that he might be buried at St. Mark's, in the habiliments of its order. God give to us like decision for Christ! Truth is ever the same; we ought to be as much moved by it as the Florentines, as ready to live or die for it as Pico or Politian.* Would, too, that from this man, monk though he was, we could learn of how little worth are ceremonies without life. "Words," he says, "must give place to deeds, and vain ceremonies to true sentiments. The Lord hath said, 'I was an hungered, and ve gave Me no meat.' He never said. 'Ye built not a beautiful church or a fine convent." And again, to those praising the pomp and costly vessels of their sanctuaries, "In the primitive church there were chalices of wood and prelates of gold; in these days the church has golden chalices and wooden prelates." Again, "Christian life does not consist in ceremonies, but in being good." If we grasp and keep this principle, we shall soon adjust all claims of Christ and the church.

Great as Savonarola the Preacher was, SAVONAROLA THE PROPHET was greater still. This seems to have been his common name amongst the Florentines. To some it is not a little puzzling that he should have borne it. How, or in what

^{*} They died the same year, and made the same request. See, for this and very much more given above, The Life of Savonarola, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

sense, can he have been a prophet? In two senses, First, it is undeniable that he claimed to I think. see visions—he had been seeing them for fifteen years he said: and these enabled him occasionally. as he thought, to catch glimpses of the future: and what is more, some of his anticipations were fulfilled: e.g., the death of the Pope, of Lorenzo de Medici, and his own death. What then? The superstition of the age may account for some of these things. but the exalted life the man lived will account for For similar things will be found in other lives, and later, lives free enough from superstition; that of John Knox notably. Savonarola was like Knox in more ways than one. Keen, shrewd, gifted with this second sight, he was gifted also with a caustic tongue: the vices of the country in each case had much need of cautery. Knox's rigorous rule of Scotland recals much of that of his prototype in Florence, and his courage in confronting Mary Stuart resembles that of the other in first ignoring and then adjuring Lorenzo the Magnificent. The Duke tried to court Savonarola when appointed, would go to San Marco in hopes to see the prior. The latter so stood aloof and avoided him that the Magnifico said, "A foreigner has come into my house, and will not even condescend to visit me." This, and other incidents—perhaps that given in the last chapter-may seem to tell more against the prior than the prince. What excuse was there for such unwarrantable rudeness one is disposed to ask?

This excuse this double excuse: first that liberty. and loyalty to Florence, required it. Lorenzo (the sack of Volterra being witness) with all his courtesv was a tyrant, and it was a brave thing to see this poor priest withstand alike his blandishments and But further. Lorenzo was the leader his favours. and the patron of lust, as well as the robber of the liberties of his country. Who wrote the rude Carnival songs? Who pampered vice and folly? Who tried to bring back an almost pagan state of society? The ambassador of Christ could not reconcile himself to these things, nor to the patron of them: and nothing, perhaps, shows how entirely he was justified in standing thus aloof, more than the fact that the Magnifico in his final hour chose him for his confessor: just as years after Piero de Medici, when driven from Florence, could find no place of safety for his valuables so safe as the despised and dreaded convent of San Marco. Now for such courage, very evidently an inspiration, whatever may be thought of his visions and predictions. Savonarola was not altogether wrongly called by the Florentines their prophet. Why, he played in the siege of Florence and afterwards, very much the same part which Jeremiah played in the siege of Jerusalem; and he fared no better at the hands of his countrymen than Jeremiah at the hands of the Jews.

Once, when preaching on the doom so often threatened, he said it was even now come. It came

in the form of a French invasion, and when the Medici failed them, and their hearts failed, then, for the first time, the Tuscans bethought them of their prophet: and on foot he marched to meet the invaders. Admitted to the presence of the French Monarch, whose coming was not deprecated, but only its manner dreaded, he addressed him thus:-"O most Christian King, thou art an instrument in the hand of the Lord, who sendeth thee to relieve the evils of Italy, and chargeth thee to reform the church which lies prostrate on the earth. thou wilt not be just and merciful: if thou dost not respect the city of Florence, its women, its citizens. its liberties: if thou forgettest the work on which the Lord sends thee: then He will choose another to fulfil it, and He will, in anger, lay his heavy hand upon thee, and will punish thee with terrible scourges. These things I tell thee in the name of the Lord." The king yielded at the time, but when he lingered, to the oppression of fair Florence, again the prophet adjured him in the name of the Lord, and thus was the city relieved of its invaders.

The French king carried off with him the base Piero de Medici, and for the first time for a generation Florence found herself free. And to whom turned she to mould the forms of freedom, and give her laws to live by? To whom could she turn so well—like Egypt to Joseph—as to the Frate who had chiefly helped to make her free? And so for some years we see the striking spectacle—which

Rome had exhibited under Arnold of Brescia, and Geneva was yet to exhibit under Calvin, and Edinburgh under Knox-of a great city receiving, and content to receive its constitution from the hand wont only to be raised to plead with God or for Him. It was for Him, indeed, that this too was done. "You know," said Savonarola, "that I never wished to enter into the affairs of the State: think you that I should do so now if I did not see that it is necessary for the state of men's souls. Give ear. then, to one who seeks only your salvation. your hearts, give heed to the common good, forget private interests: if you reform your city thus, it will be more glorious than ever." The beginning of all reforms, he told them, must be in the heart and life. "If you would have a good government. you must return to God; if it were not so, I would certainly not trouble myself about the state." great was the influence of Savonarola that he was frequently requested by the Signoria to preach on these subjects at St. Mark's and in the palace; and at last, in the Cathedral, in a service at which only men were present, he preached a sermon embodying the true principles of government. you wish to have a good government," he said, "it must be derived from God." Then the work of legislation began, and Savonarola was the legislator. A stern one, you say—a very Draco. You would not have said so, I think, if you had seen him plead for the recall of the grandson of Dante, and thus press Florence into the path of justice to the memory of her great poet. You would not have said so if you could have heard him propose that the state should purchase the magnificent library of the Medici, in danger of being scattered on their banishment. Above all, you would not have said so if you had seen how dearly he loved little children, and how he gladdened, while he purified, their young lives. Perhaps the first children's gallery in the world was that erected in the Duomo of Florence, that the little ones might hear the man whom all men wanted to hear. Perhaps the greatest children's festival ever held was that with which he taught them to keep carnival two successive years.

Paintings (one in this year's Academy) and word paintings have vied to describe the scene—the scene of the burning of the Vanita, as it is called. Carnival time was coming, and the worldly ones. the cavaliers as we should say, "determined that it should be celebrated as in the days of the Medici. The songs of Lorenzo should be sung, the indecent dances should be danced, everything should be as it had been before the Piagnoni (the Puritans) had interrupted their pleasures. To Fra Domenico. the fidus Achates of Savonarola, had been given the training of the children. So when he knew of these preparations, he determined to meet them with preparations of his own. Day after day he drilled his youthful bands, preached sermons to them. and wrote letters. Then he set the little people

themselves to work, and they went to work with a will." Scouring the town and knocking at door after door, "they asked to have given up to them everything which they denominated vanita or anathema"—everything which tended to immorality especially, bad books, immodest dresses, and such On the last day of the Carnival, they came together in the morning, eight thousand of them: "they took their way first to the Duomo, where they sang beautiful lauds. They then proceeded to the Piazza where a huge bonfire had been erected, thirty vards high and a hundred and twenty wide. piazza was crowded with people, you may be sure, and the children, arranged under the Lanzi, sang songs of praise—very different from the lewd strains of other times. At a given signal, the four guardians set fire to four corners of the pyramid; the smoke and flames leapt into the air; the trumpeters of the Signoria blew a blast, the bells of the Palazzo rang out, and the multitude raised a shout of rejoicing, and their loudest cry was this, 'Viva Gesu Christo-Gesu Christo. Re da Firenze."

Cannot we have a bonfire? I fancy I hear some one say. Cannot we burn the vanities? Bring your wanton wimples, my sisters—your foolish folds of hair, "your fast hats" (little or large, as the fashion may be), your loose novels; and you, young men, your loose songs, your betting books; and lads, the pipes you have lit too early, and the cards of which you are getting too fond. But no, says

another, priests were always too fond of burning: they have burnt bibles, they have burnt men, better men than themselves. I don't like your auto-da-fè. even though it be of vanities. Well, we will not dispute the matter or decide the point. But let us instead bring every wandering wish, or word, or look, or act, or thought, to Jesus-all doubtful doings, all double-meaning ways, all books or dress, or anything that does harm instead of good: bring them to Him here and now in your hearts, and let the love of Christ consume them-for "our God is a consuming fire." And then, having given them up in will here, give them up in deed elsewhere, and so make Jesus Christ more than King of a city: make Him the King of your souls. So shall you make the right choice, so shall you show that God and not man is your all in all.

Another burning there was to be, so it was promised the people, but the promise was never kept; and yet another burning there was, and that a fell and fearful one indeed, till the man whom we saw as Prior, heard as Preacher, hung upon his lips as Prophet, we have to see bitterly persecuted, cruelly tortured, and sadly martyred for God. It seems strange indeed that one who had exercised an influence so commanding should have ended his days as a MARTYR. The occasion of the revulsion of feeling was "the Sperimento." The prophet himself had said some rash things about God testifying to the truth of his teaching by a sign from heaven.

"He announced to the people that he should give a solemn benediction on Shrove Tuesday, in the piazza of the Convent;" and he added: "When I shall have the sacrament in my hand, I beseech everyone of you to make fervent prayer to the Lord, that if this work does not come from Him. He may send a fire which shall draw me down to Make such a prayer throughout these days. Write it, and proclaim it to all." "On the day appointed, holding the Sacrament in his hand and blessing the kneeling multitude, he prayed, 'O Lord, if I do not act with sincerity of mind, if my words come not from Thee, strike me with Thy thunder this moment." The people saw written on his face, while he spoke, the expression of a confident faith in his words.

But this rashness was far exceeded by that of over-confident friends. Fra Domenico, especially, the hero of the children's services, hearing of repeated attacks on his dear master, made by one Francesco, at the Santa Croce, claimed to take the brunt of the battle upon himself, and even Savonarola could not restrain him from offering to undergo, with Francesco, the ordeal by fire. Several more announced their willingness to submit to the same test, amongst them a child champion, of whom the Frate said that he had received comfort from many, but never comfort equal to this.

The appointed morning came; the Frate and his party went down to the piazza, which was guarded

by soldiers, but their rivals did not appear. Taunts and arguments alike failed, and at last the day wore away, and with it the people's patience, without the *sperimento* having taken place. This ought to have led to a triumph for Savonarola. But an angry crowd is not often just, and the mob of Florence chose to consider him the cause of their disappointment. And so he and his brethren were hustled back to their convent, and besieged there.

But we must look beneath the surface if we would understand the fickle violence of the Florentines. Party spirit had not a little to do with it Just as England, smarting under the severe regime of the Puritans, threw herself back recklessly into the arms of the Stuarts, so the people of Florence, urged on by men to whom the morality of the Frate's rule had been intolerable, first fell away from their allegiance, and then became open enemies. They had secured a majority on the Signoria: who were the more inveterate in their hostility, that they feared a turn of the tide in which they might be ousted, and his friends restored to power. If even in America, in the nineteenth century, the elect of the people could fall under the blow of a political assassin, it is not to be wondered at, surely, that a man of exalted purity like Savonarola was too good to be allowed to live in an Italian Republic four hundred years ago.

But there were yet other causes at work, but for which the martyrs of Florence might never have

fallen. Their death was due to religious even more than to political opposition. There were other and very different preachers and friars at Florence, and no greater contrast to the pure and severe Frate could be found than the man who then ruled Christendom as Pope. This was the infamous father of Cæsar and Lucrezia Borgia, Alexander VI. Years before, into the hands of this bad man some bad angel put a sermon of Savonarola's. The pope, indignant at its plain speaking, called a bishop, and bade him answer it. "Holy Father," he said. "I will do so, but to answer it I must have the means." "What means?" said Alexander. The bishop replied: "This friar says we ought not to have concubines, nor to encourage simony. and he says the truth. What am I, to answer The wicked Pope was cowed; but to that?" then the bishop suggested that the Frate might be silenced by honours—"Offer him the red hat." It was offered, and Savonarola's noble answer before the assembled throng was this: " I want no other red hat but that of martyrdom reddened by my own blood." And he was thus to be invested with the purple. First came a "brief" imposing silence, which for a time he obeyed; but soon broke with a gospel to be echoed this side of the Alps later on: -this gospel, namely, that such a man as issued such an edict was an unworthy and wrongly appointed pope; and that any pope, prince, or potentate, who acted so contrary to Christian teaching, was without Christ, and therefore without authority. Moreover, he wrote to some of the Christian monarchs begging them to call a general council. A letter to the king of France on this very subject fell into the hands of the hostile duke of Milan on the fatal day of the sperimento. So that many causes combined to shelter and second the attack of the mob upon their victim. St. Marco was all but sacked, and the prior and his faithful friends were led away to the palace of the Signoria as prisoners.

The secular magistrates were soon joined by the spiritual judges sent from Rome to try the cause. They came, these papal legates—as did Alva's blood council—with the sentence ready written in their pockets. Terrible were it to tell of the tortures to which the holy sufferer was subjected. But all the rack could wring from him was a confession which any servant of God might make—that he had not been quite free from the desire of personal power and honour; and the admission that his prophetical insight was not always the work of inspiration, but "of his own opinions founded upon the doctrine and study of the Holy Scriptures."

It is the custom to concede that Savonarola recanted, but the recantation seems to us only to enhance his character for humility and truth. Even his torturers were compelled to admit as much in their letter to the Pope. "We have had to deal," wrote they, "with a man of extraordinary patience

of body and wisdom of soul, and with all the help of torture we could hardly extort anything from A last interview was accorded him with Domenico and Silvestro, and they met in that hall of the Consiglio Maggiore, which Savonarola had had built, and where, by a strange requital, a greater council still, the first Italian Parliament, was to meet four hundred years later. There he slept on a friend's knee, softly as a child. Morning broke, and he breathed his last confession of faith in the Trinity, in the Eternal Word, and in the precious blood of Christ. He asked that it might not be shed for him in vain. He prayed for pardon in spiritual or temporal things in which he might have offended the city or the people; and then, with his companions receiving the Communion, he went forth to the great piazza, through which thousands now pass, all heedless of these awful memories, on their way to visit galleries of art. The Bishop who unfrocked him declared him "separated from the Church Militant," with unintentional cruelty adding, in his bungling tremor, and "from the Church Triumphant." "From the Church Militant, yes; but from the Church Triumphant, no! that is not yours to do." And so

They brought him forth to die
In the face of the sun,
They took his sacred robes away
One by one;
Whilst the people gazed, he stood amazed,
As a man undone.

He was aware of a voice
That cried aloud,
"We blot thy name this day," it said,
"From the Church of God;
O homeless soul, the thunders roll
On thy downward road."

A glorious gleam of heaven
Lighted his eye:
Ye may blot my name from the Church on earth;
But the Church of the sky,
Christ's radiant Bride, is opening wide
The gates of victory.

He stood transfigured there
In the smile of God,
Not noting the fear and wrath that shook
The cruel crowd,
Not knowing how they set him free,
To stand with Christ in ecstasy,
Where the angels sang aloud.



XII.

St. Catharine of Siena.

"Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well; Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn; Fair as the Angel that said, Hail! she seemed, Who entering filled the house with sudden light Where the roof so lowly, but that beam of Heaven Dawned sometime thro' the doorway! whose the babe Too ragged to be fondled on her lap, Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame, The common care whom no one cared for, leapt To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart, As with the mother he had never known, In gambols. Low was her voice, but won mysterious way Thro' the sealed ear to which a louder one Was all but silence. Free of alms her hand: The hand that robed your cottage walls with flowers Has often toiled to clothe your little ones; How often placed upon the sick man's brow, Cool'd it, or laid his feverous pillow smooth! Had you one sorrow and she shared it not? One burthen and she would not lighten it? One spiritual doubt she did not soothe? For she walked Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee!"

TENNYSON'S "AYLMER'S FIELD."



CHAP. XII.

ST. CATHARINE OF SIENA.*

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord."-Luke i. 38.

THERE is a church at Rome on the site of a temple dedicated by Pompey to Minerva, but the church itself dedicated to her whose words of calm and boundless faith head this chapter—Mary, the mother of Jesus. To distinguish it from other of her churches, this is known as the *Maria sopra Minerva*. It is interesting to us in many ways. It is the only Gothic church in Rome. It contains an altar attributed to Fra Angelico, and a marble statue of Christ by Michael Angelo. His friend, and the friend of Raphael and Ariosto, Cardinal Bembo, is buried here, so is Cardinal Howard and another Englishman, one of the Wilberforces. Here, too, lie the bodies of the Princess Colonna, and of Pope Caraffa, Paul IV., founder of the Inquisition, and

* I can claim no originality for my sketches. This one especially is but a poor copy. It is taken from the admirable life of Catharine of Siena, by Josephine E. Butler.

so hated, that one of his statues was flung into the Tiber. But we turn only too gladly from his tomb and from those of others, even from that of "the angelical painter" himself, to visit the shrine which occupies the chief place under the altar. Through its transparent crystal we see represented, in the habit of her order, the effigy of one who died in the adjoining Via di Santa Chiara, and whose remains are in this sarcophagus, round which tapers are continually burning—the shrine of Catharine of Siena.

Who was she? When and where did she live? And what did she do that her shrine should be so honoured, and her name so loved? She was, if any deserve the name, a reformer before the Reformation. She lived, or rather died, just five hundred years ago. Born of humble parents and in a provincial town, her work took her to many cities and to foreign countries, and, whether far or near, she exerted an influence which showed more than any perhaps in history the power of true worth, of holy living, and of entire devotion and implicit obedience to the Spirit of the living God.

Let me speak of her home and the call of God; of her friends and her ministry for man; of her country, and of her services for Christendom. And while I try to tell the story, will my readers all find out the lesson for themselves—yea, many a lesson, that home and God, humanity and country, may become sacred to them also.

No HOME was ever more prized, or deserved to be more prized, than that Italian house, workshop, and little chapel, over the door of which are written in letters of gold, the words, SPOSÆ CHRISTI KATHARINÆ DOMUS. It stood, nav it still stands, in the Contrada d'Oca, the poor quarter of the Tuscan city of Siena. Catharine was one of twenty-five children borne by the good Lapa to the honest dyer, Giacomo Benincasa. They were parents to be proud of. The mother, in spite of the extent of her family charge, seems to have led a calm and beautiful life, and it was prolonged to the age of ninety. The father was so mild and gentle that he would ever throw oil on any troubled waters. "Now, now," he would say, "do not say anything which is not just or kind, and God will give you His blessing." He never would hear his enemies spoken of harshly: "Let him alone, dear, let him alone, God will show him his error, and be our defence." This soon came true, says his wife, for our enemy openly acknowledged his error.

It was her father who became Catharine's champion when grace conquered her for Christ. "He chanced to enter her room one evening when she was absorbed in prayer. When he turned from her door he was covering his face with his his hand, as if dazzled; he told Lapa that he had seen a wonderful light resting upon and enveloping the girl; some said that the light he saw rested in the form of a snow-white dove upon her

head." This no doubt overdrawn account yet tells its own tale, and a very sweet tale it is, in the glimpse it gives us of both parents and child.

That child was a favourite with other people besides her father and mother. "The dwellers in the Contrada d'Oca found such consolation and sweetness in her society that she received the name of Euphrosyne, which means joy and satisfaction." "She loved every living thing. Nature, beasts, birds, and flowers were very dear to her." But above all, her young heart glowed with the love of Jesus. Once, when six years old, sent with her brother Stephen on an errand, the golden clouds of evening caught the gable of a church, and canopied beneath their glory seemed to stand the vision of the Saviour. The boy had run on down Turning round he saw his sister far behind him, gazing into the sky. He called her, but she did not come, and when he ran back and took her by the hand, she seemed like one waking from a trance, and exclaimed, "Oh, Stephen, if you could only see what I see, you would never have disturbed me thus."

After this Catharine was missing from home sometimes. Once she got quite out of the city, and found a little grotto under a shelving rock, and with great joy set herself to pray and meditate. But good sense and affection never lost their place in the little saint's soul; they were part of her sainthood, indeed, both then and always.

So now she was afraid, not of the anger but of the anxiety of her parents, "They will think I am lost," she said, "and how sorry they will be." God revealed to her that He designed for her another mode of life, and that she must not leave the house of her father.

He and her mother soon after began to talk of marriage for the girl, but Catharine had other thoughts; and though, for a little time, her habit of prayer decayed and the spark of spiritual life burnt low, "her secret determination to devote herself wholly in the unmarried state to the service of God was never given up." Every little ruse to draw her from it failed, and her brothers observing her constancy said, "We are beaten; Catharine has won." About this time she had a dream, in which she was assured of the fulfilment of her desire to be admitted a mantellata, that is a wearer of the cloak or mantle of St. Dominic. That very day she called together her father, mother, brothers, and sisters, and entreated them to give up all prospects of an earthly union for her. Willingly would she remain at home as a servant or anything, but in any case she felt she must obey God rather than man, and that marriage was not God's will for her. Sobs and tears were their first reply. At last her father said: "God keep us, dearest child, from longer opposing the resolution which He has inspired. Do all that the Holy Spirit commands you, only pray for us, that we may

become worthy of Him who has called you at so early an age." Then turning to his wife and children he said: "Let no one seek to turn Catharine from her holy resolution. We could never find for her a more beautiful or honourable alliance, for her soul is wedded to her Lord." There is a little room shown in Siena to this day which from that time became a little sanctuary. For three years Catharine scarcely quitted this chamber. And though we cannot approve the austerities she practised by her sparing diet and her scanty sleep; her bed of a few planks and no coverlet; her long prayers through the night, till the first sound of the matin bell from the tower of her dearly-loved church of St. Dominic:—yet we cannot doubt that during these three years of solitude she was learning the secret of communion with God in a way which told for blessing, not only on her future life, but on the history of Italy and the world.

After a time her mother went to beg admission for her amongst the Mantellatas. She received for reply that it was not the custom to give the mantle to young maidens—indeed that no such ever wore it. On a second application being made by Lapa, the elders replied: "If she be not too handsome we will receive her on your account and hers." It was well for Catharine that she was not beautiful; she was in fact a true, simple, self-forgetting woman, and bore with her the almost

blunt manners of the "daughter of the Republic,"
—the "child of the people" they loved to call her.

Before she was launched on her great life work one other preparation was needed for her-the preparation of conflict: she must not only fast and pray, but be tempted by the devil. A home of her own, which she had refused so persistently. began to appear to her for a moment a delightful dream. The love songs of the troubadours were an instant sweeter than the psalms of David; nor for our part do we see why she might not have accepted both the earthly and the heavenly, like St. Bridget, the prophetess of Sweden, wife, mother, and queen. Like the angels who came to minister to Jesus so soon as the devil left Him, there came unto Catharine, in a dream or vision, the angels' Lord, putting on her finger a ring in which blazed a diamond of unearthly beauty. He seemed to say to her: "I, thy Creator and Redeemer, espouse thee in faith and love. this token in purity, until we celebrate in the presence of the Father the eternal nuptials of the Lamb. Daughter, now acquit thyself courageously; perform with a dauntless spirit the works which My providence will assign to thee; thou shalt triumph over all enemies." This is the marriage of St. Catharine, which has been illustrated by the pencil of Correggio and Bartolommeo. A "mystical marriage and unity," which it were to be wished were illustrated oftener, not only by the skill

of painters, but by the lives of believers. completely absorbed was her soul in God; how entirely independent she was of human help will appear from the startling fact that, "up to this period, she never had been under the direction of any spiritual pastor or guide." Moreover (which seems to us of the nineteenth century more astonishing still), till this time she could neither read nor write; and yet she lived to rank with Petrarch and Boccacio as one of those who formed the Italian language; and to compare, and not unfavourably, with the great Dante himself. Encouragement here there is for all deprived of early advantages to learn, that the want of these is not an inevitable bar to progress; and still more. that every young athlete, if he be but "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," may be "more than conqueror through Him that loved us."

Her probation finished, the Lord sent this soul out of her solitude into active life. For three years her chamber had been almost a hermit's cell. God now sent her to join her family, and to work for the world. "Go quickly, my daughter," said the voice she knew so well, "it is the hour of the family repast; join it, and I will be with thee." Catharine burst into tears: "Wherein have I offended Thee, my God, that Thou should'st send me from Thee. I fled from society that I might find Thee; must I mingle anew in worldly affairs, to fall again into my former worldliness and stupidity, and perhaps offend against

Thee." "Be calm, my child," was the answer so far as it could be put into words, "I desire not that thou should'st be separated from Me, but more closely united to Me by charity to thy fellow-creatures. You must walk not on one but on two feet, and fly to heaven with two wings: that is, love to Me and thy neighbour." "Lord, not my will but Thine be done; but if I presume not too much, how can I, who am so miserable and fragile, be useful to my fellowcreatures; my very sex forbids it?" To whom the Lord, as the angel Gabriel to Mary, "The word impossible belongeth not to God: am not I He who created the human race, who formed both man and woman? I pour out the favour of My spirit on whom I will. With Me there is neither male nor female, neither plebeian nor noble, but all are equal The sin of man has become so great before Me. that I am about to visit it with chastisement. But first, in My pity, I would send to them, and that by women, unlearned and by nature fragile, wherefore, my daughter, make haste to obey Me. Wheresoever thou mayest go in the future. I will be with thee: I will never leave thee, but will visit thee and direct all thy actions." Then Catharine, in the words of her, who is the crown of womanhood—her divine Son was more than the crown of all humanity exclaimed in faith and submission, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word."

Great was the change that came over the young

life from this day forward. She that had been a solitary, became now the sought of all, and the help of all. At the sound of the city bell she would rise, and sally forth with food for some sufferer's necessities, and "lifting her gift through the opening in the upper part of the door, which in summer the poor people used generally to leave open, she would pray for God's blessing on the house, and glide quickly away in the cool shadows of the early morning, leaving the sleeping inmates ignorant of who their daily benefactor might be."

Such works of charity occupied the life of Catharine from the age of eighteen to twenty, not without provoking attack on the ground of singularity. Some spoke against her fasting, and said, "I warrant you she feeds herself well enough in secret." Others brought against her vile accusations; and these slanders gained such ground that a kind of committee of enquiry was formed to examine the She took this, like her other trials, to matter. Christ. "Thou knowest, O my Saviour," she said, "the efforts of the father of lies to hold me back from what Thy love urges me to undertake. me, then, O my Lord and my God, for Thou knowest I am innocent." Then she took the crown of thorns her Saviour seemed to bring her, and pressed it on her head; and at length the long controversy ended by her pastor admitting that she was right, and saying:-"Henceforth, act according to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, for I perceive that

God will accomplish great things in you." This was not the first case, nor the last, in which "those dwelling in the valley have presumed to judge of the tops of the mountains." In such things it is a small matter to be judged of men. Happy is he on whose side the Lord's judgment is, as clearly as it was with Catharine. He showed her glorious things during these trial times. Her friend and biographer Raymond would find her in church "ravished out of her senses," and saying in an undertone, "I have seen the secrets of God." "Tell us what you have seen." "Nay, human language would falsify the scenes, they are unlawful for man to utter." good God is, how much better than man! At this very time a poor leper, whom Catharine had placed in hospital and waited on, joined in the calumnies against her, and one of the sisters of St. Dominic. also tenderly nursed by Catharine when dying of a cancer, did the same. Thus, "amid evil report and good report, as poor, yet making many rich." Catharine filled up the circle of home life and of home like charity with the light and love of Jesus Christ.

HER FRIENDS AND HER MISSION are terms which may designate the period of Catharine's life that succeeded. All the charities of the heart lived and breathed in her to the full. Cut off from one alone, and that solely by her own act, she poured the stream of her affection only the more deeply in a thousand channels; nor are we to think of her as

expending her life merely in sympathy. The good God, more tender to her than she was to herself, gave her gladness, and gratitude, and great affection from many friends. Raymond was one. Called to Siena in 1373, "I was serving God in a cold and formal manner," he says, "when the plague broke out in the city." Catharine's prayers brought health to many of the sick. mond was one of these. Attacked in the midst of his exertions for the plague-stricken, he crawled to her house, where, unable to stand, he lay prostrate, till she, placing both her pure hands on his forehead, remained absorbed in prayer for an hour and a half, when he fell into a peaceful slumber, and then awoke in perfect health. "Go now," she said, "and labour for the salvation of souls, and render thanks to the Lord, Who has saved you from this great danger." He rose up to be her firm friend and faithful memorialist.

An aged hermit of Vallombrosa, known as John of the Cell, and sometimes, for his merry temper, called the new Socrates, came to Siena to converse with Catharine. He was afterwards selected by her "to carry many of her most important despatches to Rome and elsewhere."

Friar Bartholomew, of Siena, in a deposition before a notary, speaks of her character and conduct in this inner circle of friendship. "She was very fond of lilies, roses, violets, and all flowers, and used to make them up into superb wreaths

bouquets. Her companions were young maidens like herself, wearing the mantle of St. I often saw them sitting, weaving Dominic. flowers, and singing together. When I began visiting her in her house she was young. I never saw the least shade of melancholy in her countenance, which was always cheerful and even merry. When the pain in her side tortured her cruelly, and hindered her from rising, her friends pitied her, and said: 'Mother, how you are suffering?' would smile, and say: 'I feel a gentle trouble in my side;' and she would add: 'I think I know how my Lord suffered when one of His hands was already nailed, and they drew the other arm with such violence that His ribs were disjointed.' Whenever she spoke of the martyrs her face would flush, and her eyes gleam, and she would spread out her white robe, and smilingly say: 'O, how lovely it would be if it were all stained with blood for the love of Jesus!""

Another friend was Stephen Maconi, a young nobleman of Siena, in early life given to pleasure. His family being at open war with one more powerful, he went to Catharine, who had often reconciled persons, and even tribes, at enmity. He was astonished at his reception, which was that of a sister towards a long absent brother. He listened eagerly as she engaged him to repent and live a Christian life, and went away to be reconciled to his enemy. This was the beginning of a long and

holy friendship. It was to Stephen that Catharine sent the first letter ever written with her own hand. "She loved me," he says, "with the tenderness of a mother;" and adds, "I never heard a frivolous word from her lips."

I must not forget to mention amongst her friends William of England, celebrated for his Oxford honours, but now a stranger in a strange land; nor Andrew Vanni, the painter. He had been guilty of several assassinations, but made a promise to Friar William, whose portrait he was painting, to go and see Catharine. Resolute, however, to continue his evil living, he hardened his heart against her arguments; but when she came back after solitary prayer, he offered to give up one of four great enmities he cherished; and as he reached the door, sensible of consolation through this one word of peace, he fell on his knees, exclaiming, "I am vanquished; I confess it; I am ready now to do all you desire." "Dear brother, she said, "I spoke to you, and you refused to listen; then I turned to God, and He has not rejected my petition." Years after, when Vanni was elected "captain of the people," this noble woman wrote to him:-" The only means to preserve peace in thyself, in the city, in the world, is constantly to guard and maintain holy justice; it is through its violation that so many evils have come, and it is because I desire to see justice reign in thee and in our dear city that I write thee these lines. In order to be a just ruler, justice must first reign in thine own conscience."

Vanni's sister was amongst Catharine's women friends; amongst whom also were the noble and venerable widow of the proud aristocrat Salimbeni, Florentine ladies of almost equal rank, the laughing Cecca, and a dear little child Laurencia. But her inseparable companion was another mantellata, a young widow, Alessia, to whom we owe much of Catharine's inner history, for she was sometimes even the sharer of her private devotions. Alessia's fatherin-law, an aged nobleman, very hard and worldly, was one of the many forced to yield to the grace of God in His handmaid, and consented to give up everything but a deadly hatred against a certain prior. "I want to kill him," he said. But Catharine said such affecting things concerning this prior, that next morning the old man rose before the sun, and carrying with him a favourite falcon, bent his steps alone to the prior's church. The prior fled; but the count, with his falcon on his wrist, sent a messenger to crave an audience. "God has touched my heart." he said, "and I am come to offer you reconciliation and this falcon."

It would take too long to tell of the souls to whom Catharine was led to minister. Two instances must suffice. There was one Lazarini, a professor of philosophy, whose brilliant lectures attracted crowds. A stern critic of Catharine, he resolved to pay her a visit, hoping to find fresh faults to criticise.

He left her, thinking she might be a good person, but much overrated; but next day, he felt a great oppression at his heart, and even began to weep. Catharine, who had never ceased to pray for him, was not surprised that he sought her again, and begged to know the way of salvation. "The way of salvation for you," she said, when he importuned her to tell him, "is to despise the world, its vanities, and its smiles."

The other instance shall be that of a young knight of Perugia, Nicola Tuldo, condemned to die for high treason. At his request the young Sienese went over to see him; he was comforted and humbled. "He besought me, by the love of God," she writes, "to promise to be with him at his execution. I promised, and have kept my word. I went with him to the Holy Communion, which till then he had never received. He kept saving. 'Lord, do not leave me; if Thou be near me all will be well.' 'Courage, my brother beloved,' I said, 'you are going to your heavenly marriage feast, bathed in the precious blood of Christ, and with the dear name of Jesus on your lips, and I am going to meet you at the place of execution.' 'How comes such grace to be shown to me, he said, and will you, joy of my soul, indeed await me at that holy place? Then I will go there with a strong and joyous step, and you will there speak to me sweet and blessed words of the love of God.' My heart was so full that in the midst of that vast

crowd, I saw no one, and heard nothing but the promise of God. 'Go, gentle brother,' I said to him, 'to your eternal marriage; soon you will have entered into the life which knows no ending.'" Can we wonder that as the axe fell, and her hands were held out to receive his severed head, her name was added to that of his Saviour? With these on his lips he died.

Thus, she who ministered to men's bodies in the plague, ministered to their souls in ways intensely winning and wonderfully blessed of God.

One could hardly imagine a greater sphere of usefulness. A wonderful field it was for a weak and suffering woman, who moreover had but just learnt to write, and but shortly before had taught herself to read, but God designed that she should see greater things than these; and as she had testified for Him in Siena, so must she bear witness also at Rome.

I must try, with the utmost condensation, to group together the scenes that will show you HER SERVICES TO HER COUNTRY AND TO CHRISTENDOM. She had already taken evangelizing journeys in the country round Siena, journeys in which she spoke sometimes to as many as two thousand people at once. She was now to be called to take more distant journeys, and to be occupied at times with more secular cares. She lived at a time when, in Italy, every man did that which was right in his own eyes;—a time in which

Petrarch could write (it was during the seventy years' captivity, so-called, during which the Papal Court was removed to France): "I saw waiting at the gate of thy palace, O Pontiff of Avignon, a venerable matron, whom I seemed to recognise, yet I did not dare to pronounce her name; her countenance was sorrowful, but the greatness of her soul beamed through the thick veil of sadness which enveloped her. I asked at last her name, and the answer reached me through her sobs—it was Roma."

The capital was not the only city which suffered through the absence of its lord. Sixty episcopal cities, and one thousand five hundred fortified places, looked up to him as their suzerain, and the ravages that poor Italy suffered from the rule or the misrule of his legates are almost beyond belief. Count Robert of Geneva, a cardinal as well as a count, once told ambassadors from Bologna that he would not leave their city till he had washed his hands and feet in their blood. Forcing another city, Cesena, to receive his troops, he sent for Hawkwood, a free-booter (and an Englishman, I am ashamed to say), and ordered a universal Hawkwood hesitated for a moment. massacre. but the Cardinal taunting, persuading, and bribing, cried, "I want blood, blood, blood!" None were spared; from morning to night the slaughter continued, the cardinal standing all day, a crucifix in one hand and a sword in the other, reiterating, "Kill them, kill them, all, all," and "not resting till the last of the five thousand of the peaceful inhabitants of Cesena was slain." This Cardinal Robert was the man who was afterwards, in 1378, elected Pope under the name of Clement VII.

Pisa sought Catharine's help; for a time, too, she was the faithful ally of Rienzi, the Roman tribune: but her greatest task was undertaken at the entreaty of the Republic of Florence. smaller cities, Cardinal Robert had advanced against the Tuscan capital; and the council of war, believing that no influence of their own could equal that of the saintly Mantellata of Siena, commissioned one of their number to go to that city and negotiate the matter with Catharine. already, it seems, written to the Pope of the bad pastors and rulers, infected by the conduct of some great captains who were but devils incarnate. She had entreated pity for the Italians, peace for Italy, and the presence of the Shepherd amongst his distracted flock. "I should be very blamable if I wrote with the idea of teaching you a lesson; I am constrained only by the love of truth and the longing to see you, gentle and beloved Father, in peace and quietude."

This brave woman now hastened to Florence. After a fortnight spent in mastering the case, she set out over the Apennines and the Alps to carry the commission of Florence to the feet of the Pontiff. The 18th of June, our Waterloo, was also

her's. On that day she entered the city where the popes lived for so many years away from their duties and their cares.

The Avignon we see to-day must be a very different place from the city of five hundred years ago, where Petrarch was a visitor, Rienzi a prisoner, and which Giotto came to adorn with glory and beauty. Some of the halls have disappeared, so have some of the bells of La Ville Sonante (as the city is called), so has the tomb of the celebrated Laura; but the memory has not yet perished of the holy energy with which the handmaid of the Lord laboured day and night to bring back peace to Italy and purity to the Church. Pope Gregory, whose own life was blameless, yet was too weak to enforce the rule he would have desired. Bridget, Queen of Sweden, ten years before had dared to write to him: "Thy worldly court is the ruin of the celestial court—the Church; all who come within the influence of thy court fall into the Gehenna of perdition, and in these days houses of ill-fame are more honoured than my holy church."

Catharine, and she was no queen, dared to say the same, and to his face; looking round on his princes, she asked why she found in the Pontifical court, in which all the virtues ought to flourish, nothing but the contagion of the most disgraceful vices? Her chief difficulty was with the *ladies* of the *Curia*, the most brilliant and beautiful women of Provence. "She is very peculiar," said one. "She

has no beauty to speak of," said another. "How odd is her dialect," said a third; and so on. But soon they proceeded to something more than criticism. The Pope's sister, the Countess of Valentinois, begged Catharine to pay her a visit, that she might confer on those beautiful truths of which she had spoken. The Pope's niece followed Catharine to church, and prostrating herself at her side, pierced her foot with a stiletto. For a time Catharine remained immovable in prayer, but she limped from the church in agony, leaving traces of the bleeding foot on the floor, and continued lame for some time. Still, at the request of Gregory, she continued to hold conferences. The study of the Scripture had passed out of use at Avignon, but her addresses were invariably founded on the word of God.

Meanwhile, the secular objects of her embassy were not neglected. The Florentines might have had peace if they had been so minded, and Rome was soon again to have her Pontiff, spite of his weakness and of all the opposition of the Curia. One day, soon after her arrival at Avignon, meeting Catharine in his library, "It is here," he said, "that I find repose for my soul in study and the contemplation of nature." "In the name of God and of duty," was the reply, "you will close the gates of this magnificent palace, turn your back on this beautiful country, and set out for Rome, where you will be amidst ruins, tumults, and

malaria fever." Another day, a year later perhaps, he said: "Catharine, I do not ask you to give me advice; I ask you to declare to me the will of God." She hesitated, and he commanded her in the name of obedience; she bowed her head, and replied: "Who knows more perfectly the will of God than your Holiness, who has pledged himself by a secret vow"—a vow made on receipt of the letters of the Queen of Sweden. This touched him, his resolution was taken; and though his father said he should not leave Avignon except over his dead body, Gregory carried out his purpose, and, spite of dangers by land and sea, he reached Rome at last.

Catharine now urged him to set about the reforms which she saw to be the only salvation for the Church. "I write to you, father, in the name and in the power of Christ crucified. In His name I adjure you to see that the ministers you appoint be men of virtue and faith; that they preach repentance in that name, and that they be men who have first purified themselves. Others, instead of wholesome plants are but fœtid weeds, giving forth poisonous odours. Forgive my presumption, Holy Father; my sorrow pleads my excuse; be ready to give thy life for Christ, determined to uproot vice and to plant virtue."

About this time Catharine paid her third visit to Florence, it was in the days of bitterest conflict between Guelphs and Ghibellines. A house had been assigned her, but it was assailed; cries were heard of "Where is that accursed woman? Bring her out and burn her alive; cut her in pieces." "Where is the wicked woman? Where is Catharine?" cried the ringleader, brandishing a sword. She kneeled down before him, and said quietly and fearlessly, "I am Catharine, do whatever God permits you to do to me, but in His name I forbid you to come near or to touch any of these who are with me." At these words the man dropped his sword, and at last slunk away; and peace, greatly through her means, was soon restored to the republic.

What little quiet was allowed her, in the midst of these turbulent scenes, was occupied in writing or dictating her book, "The Dialogue," in which she told much of the converse of God with her But her repose did not last long. She was bidden to Rome. More than forty accompanied her, her mother and Alessia amongst the rest, and some of the great nobles of Siena. They had all things common, the women in turn presiding over the united household. Pope Urban now occupied the Papal chair, and bade her to his palace; when, at his urgency, she had addresed the assembled cardinals, "this poor humble woman confounds us," he said. In his days arose the great schism when pope was arrayed against anti-pope, Catharine strove to gather to Urban's side a council of wise and holy men; she wrote, too, to the rulers of distant nations to support what seemed to her the righteous cause. She prayed for it when the conflict closed in on all sides. She was praying for it once when an attack was made by the enemy who had seized the castle of St. Angelo; she now added action to prayer, and throwing herself at the feet of the commander, induced him to surrender to avoid further bloodshed. It was a great victory. and the name of Catharine was sounded in all the songs of triumph. But her victorious frame was itself sinking into decay. "She walked the streets of Rome like one from the tomb." Day by day that pale, slight, ghost-like figure was seen intent upon the Master's work. "She ruled in Rome," ruled by the force of her prayers and the power of Christian love.

The following is the last prayer of hers recorded: "Thou, Lord, art the great Master, who can'st create and recreate, who can'st break and bring to nought this fragile vase as Thou wilt. Oh! Father, I offer again to Thee, myself, my life for Thy church. I offer to Thee, and cast upon Thee, my loved ones, for they are my own soul. Forgive my sins, my ignorance, and my negligence towards them; I have sinned, Saviour, have pity on me." The same sense of insufficiency and unworthiness mingled with her latest breath. She was heard saying, "I have miserably offended Thee, O Eternal, by my negligence, and ignorance, and ingratitude. Thou did'st command me to seek Thee in all things:

I have sought my own consolation. Thou did'st charge me with the care of souls: I have been weak towards them, have failed in solicitude, and in not giving them holy example and wise counsel. Thou, Lord, did'st choose me in my tender infancy for Thy spouse, but I have not been faithful enough to Thee, my memory not always filled with Thee, nor my will bent towards loving Thee with all my soul." Who is not forced to exclaim, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?"

After this, says the chronicler, she asked pardon of us all. "My beloved," she said, "I have indeed hungered and thirsted for your salvation; I dare not say the contrary, nevertheless, I have been wanting to you in many things: forgive me."

Stephen Maconi had heard a voice saying: "She to whom you owe your soul is dying." "My Stephen," she said, in hastened to Rome. her artless, affectionate way, "I thank God that you have come. His mercy will guide you also in the way of salvation." Alessia supported her drooping head, while the aged Lapa stood motionless on the other side. Catharine asked her mother to kiss her, to bless her, and to forgive her, while the aged mother entreated her daughter's prayers. So far all was heavenly; but hell would not lose its last grip without an effort; and Satan shook her for a little with terrors and accusations. The echoes of human cavils were again heard, and

again she answered, conscious of the purity of the purpose which had animated her life: "No, never for vain glory, but for the honour and glory of God." The cloud passed, the rain of her tears passed too; and as they were watching her they saw her face as it had been the face of an angel. Again she prayed for all her mystic family, using Christ's own words in John xvii. "Finally she blessed us all, and hailed that supreme moment of life which she had so much desired, pronouncing these words: 'Yes, Lord, Thou callest me, and I go to Thee. I go, not on account of my merits, but solely on account of Thy mercy. And that mercy I implore in the name, O Jesus, of Thy precious She breathed forth several times the words. 'O precious Saviour, O precious blood.' She then said: 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,' and with a countenance radiant as an angel's, she bowed her head and died."

This was on the 29th of April, 1380. The saintly woman had just attained the age of the Saviour she so dearly loved and so devotedly served, and with whom she now dwells "in glory everlasting."

In presence of such a life and death, controversy is silent. "And without controversy," in all communions, one and the same Spirit divides to everyone severally as He will. We have protested with our whole soul against the corruptions of Christendom, and while they last, men must continue to protest;

but we claim also, in the words of the most ancient creed in the world, to "believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints;" and for my part, while compelled by conscience to join in the protest, the love of Christ constrains me to keep some sense of communion. I decline to cut myself off from the continuity of Christendom; and much as I long for another Luther, one could rejoice also to see the church of Christ enriched by another Savonarola, St. Francis, or Catharine of Siena.

Can we leave such a record without being smitten by the beauty of holiness? Surely a life like this might awaken in the coldest soul a passionate longing to be pure, and good, and useful. And what is the secret of all? God's presence in the soul—that is the secret; and the obedience of faith—that is the door through which God enters. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord"—it is all here; "be it unto me according to Thy word." Confidence, consecration—and all the glory that follows—are wrapped up in one such receptive and submissive word.

And here we close this chapter, and with it this book. Many other scenes were visited, many other lessons learnt. But those traced above may suffice to show the beauty which the God of nature, the grace which the God of redemption has lavished on the lovely Italian land. Some of them shew also, alas! how human superstition, vice, and crime

have sadly marred all. God give us gratitude to retain all the good, grace to resist all the evil of these influences; and so to live, that both the author and his readers may be ever the better for "LESSONS LEARNT IN ITALY."



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